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**THE SPLENDID MISERY**



# THE SPLENDID MISERY

*The story of the Presidency  
and power politics at close range*



**by Jack Bell**

DOUBLEDAY & COMPANY, GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK

**1960**

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To Helen

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*"The second office of this government is honorable & easy,  
the first is but a splendid misery."*

—Thomas Jefferson, in a letter to  
Elbridge Gerry, Philadelphia, Pa.,  
May 13, 1797.



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**THE SPLENDID MISERY**



# 1 The Great Surrender



September's sun drifted down warmly on the two men who stood beaming in the doorway of the Morningside Heights mansion at Columbia University in New York. While photographers popped their flash bulbs, the taller of the two, a man with a rounded face, receding hairline, and a slight paunch, smiled in an almost fatherly way on his companion. The latter, who wore his civilian clothes with a military bearing, responded with a justly famous wide grin.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower and Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio had closed ranks for the first time since their bitter struggle for the 1952 Republican presidential nomination two months before in Chicago.

In two hours, over a breakfast of melon, bacon and eggs, toast and coffee, a shattered Republican party had been mended—at a price. The price was Taft's. Eisenhower paid it in the coin of the "great surrender."

On that drowsy autumnal morning the groundwork had been laid for one of the signal failures of Eisenhower as a President. There he had surrendered the presidential command over a Republican Congress that would need to be led by the nose toward any progressive goals that might be attained. In the cheery breakfast room the two men had left behind, an unspoken pact had been reached. Eisenhower could have the White House. Congress would belong to Taft and his assigns.

The two robust-looking men who stood in the doorway, blinking a little in the bright sunlight, represented the old and the new in the Republican party.

Everyone knew what the old epitomized. The Taft record had been written in a hundred Senate votes. It had been emblazoned in countless newspaper headlines. In the aggregate it spelled conservatism. It was an enlightened conservatism, perhaps, yet one

that regarded progress as considerably less desirable than it was inevitable.

One could wonder what fresh, new political viewpoint was being impressed upon the Republican party by Eisenhower who had vanquished the old guard at July's nominating convention in Chicago. Did he represent anything beyond the answer to a stark Republican hunger for a November victory which would end the twenty lean years of Democratic White House rule?

Certain of Eisenhower's utterances of prepolitical days had carried the musty aroma of reaction. There had been an era in which he had been the fair-haired lad of the oil rich in his native Texas. Then he had rung the bell with these fat-cat political contributors by tossing off such observations as that in which he said that if all Americans wanted was security, they could find it in jail.

In two presidential terms we journalistic observers were to watch the curve of progressivism in this man's public utterances arc high into the New Deal clouds. Annoyed regular Republicans would denounce him for another Franklin Roosevelt. But these same Republicans would settle back with satisfaction when the curve descended again into a conservatism in which Taft would have been comfortably at home.

In the end, largely because of the Morningside Heights surrender, there would be little difference between the old and the new in domestic matters. But the divergence on foreign problems would remain wide. Here, as we shall see, the surrender would exact a telling price.

To those who watched the little tableau on that September day, it was apparent that even before his election Eisenhower was mortgaging to the man he had defeated at Chicago an authority that would cramp the full sweep of power any modern President must maintain undiminished if he is to surmount the challenges of a space-age world.

A President wears many hats; he is the ceremonial chief of state, the executive charged with enforcing the laws, the principal administrator of the government, the nation's top diplomat, the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, the manager of the econ-

omy, and the head of his political party. Beyond all this, the President has become the keeper of world peace.

If he is to deal competently with this spectrum of responsibility, he must be, as Abraham Lincoln said, "the nation's first legislator, the inventor, as well as the executor of policy, the source of the nation's political consciousness."

As we shall see in tracing the pattern by which the modern American presidency developed, there had been no epoch of true national advancement that did not have as its commanding figure a strong chief executive. Where the President was timid or ineffective, the people suffered. Where Congress was able to command, there was reaction, stultification, and often near-disaster.

By its nature the kind of "Congressional government" envisioned by the Founding Fathers could only be the creature of compromise, since almost all legislative action had to be the product of backing and filling, dissecting and patching. While this system provided the necessary check against foolhardy adventure, it would, unless fought off, smother bold executive action.

As Woodrow Wilson correctly said, the President's is "the only national voice" that can rally the country to crisis or move it off the dead center of controversy.

In the agreement with Taft, Eisenhower was surrendering at the outset some of the vital weapons the President would need in his arsenal in the conflict between the executive and Congress —a conflict that Harry Truman rightly tabbed as "inherent in our form of government."

It must be added that because of the political inexperience of the potential President who was involved, there was a certain inevitability about the surrender.

A Theodore Roosevelt might have resisted a deal with this particular Taft and might have taken his chances on election. T.R. might have gambled that he could outmaneuver a hostile party leadership in Congress. But to Eisenhower the facts of life seemed overwhelmingly in Taft's favor.

Taft was "Mr. Republican," the effective leader of the conservatives who controlled Congress and seemed likely to continue to do so.

By the relatively simple mechanism of coming to terms with Senator Richard B. Russell of Georgia, canny headman of the southern Democratic conservatives, Taft had been able to force through the Senate such measures as the Taft-Hartley labor law. Working with Russell, he had blocked many of the left-of-center proposals of President Truman.

Taft and Russell never had much difficulty agreeing. They were wide apart in the field of civil rights, but even there a tacit understanding existed that talk would be substituted for action. And when the senator from Ohio and the senator from Georgia operated together, a similar coalition in the House of Representatives was almost certain to follow in their tracks.

When all of this had been outlined to him, Eisenhower understood that in a practical way Taft would have a veto on any legislation proposed to Congress by a Republican President.

There was also for Eisenhower the pressing and unpleasant necessity of getting elected. It would be immensely more difficult—and possibly impossible—to bring about this result if Taft sulked in his tent.

It had taken weeks to bring these two men together on the mansion steps. After his nomination at Chicago in July, the general had marched promptly to Taft's hotel suite to praise the loser as a great American. Taft had responded with a pledge to "do everything possible" for the party ticket. But there had followed a long and painful silence.

As Taft's silence became more and more marked, the bloom gradually faded from the July rose of Eisenhower's convention victory. The presidential candidate's managers were singing the September blues. When the Scripps-Howard newspapers said editorially that Eisenhower was "running like a dry creek," the general's strategists decided that somehow, some way, Taft must be won over. They were bolstered in this decision by the general's distaste for political warfare. A Harry Truman might thrive on such combat, but it was not Eisenhower's nature to force a battle that could be avoided.

With some newspapers speculating that he might "take a walk," Taft had gone off to Murray Bay, Canada, where the Taft

family had vacationed for years. While Taft rested and licked his wounds, prominent supporters of the defeated Ohioan were turning their backs on the general. Former President Herbert Hoover, a die-hard Taft man, refused any outright pledge to Eisenhower. Stiffly, Hoover said, "Being a Republican, I shall vote for the Republican ticket." Lieutenant General Albert C. Wedemeyer, who had headed the Citizens Committee for Taft, didn't know if he would support Eisenhower. Wedemeyer called himself "a good loser but a disappointed American."

Nearing panic, Eisenhower's managers dispatched a July 17 telegram inviting Taft to confer with the general. No answer was forthcoming. Then Senator Frank Carlson of Kansas, an Eisenhower strategist, phoned Taft's assistant, I. Jack Martin, to arrange a conference between the two principals. When information on this conversation leaked to newsmen, Taft stormed that he would not be a party to any "circus" meeting with Eisenhower.

Those who knew Taft had no doubt that, come what might, the Ohio senator would be found voting for the Republican ticket on Election Day. He had displayed his party loyalty under what, for him, were even more difficult circumstances by supporting Wendell L. Willkie in 1940 and twice backing Thomas E. Dewey in 1944 and 1948. But Taft, who knew an ace in the hole when he saw it, meant to play this political poker game to the hilt.

In Taft's estimate, the stakes were high. He was not sure how much the GOP "leftists"—as he called them—who had the general in tow, had been able to indoctrinate him with their ideas. If he could prevent it, Taft had no intention of permitting any Johnny-come-lately to take for a ride in "socialistic" fields the Republican party he had labored long and faithfully to mold in his own brand of conservatism.

When at last he decided to make his move, Taft began with a characteristic gesture. Returning from Canada to his home base of Cincinnati, Ohio, he sat down and drafted a statement of the tenets of the Republican party. Thus armed he had come to breakfast with Eisenhower. It was a pleasant meal during which the two men chatted, feeling each other out. When it was over, Taft pulled out his proposed statement for Eisenhower to study. In the

few minutes they discussed it, they made only minor, penciled changes in the original Taft draft.

Now, as the last photographic flash was dying away, Taft was ready to disclose the terms of the surrender. A final handshake and Eisenhower, the grin fading from his face, turned and walked quickly into the house. With a fleeting glance at his departing host, Taft tucked a brief case under his arm, turned, and strode vigorously down the street to a nearby hotel. There a sweating, milling mob of a hundred reporters and photographers—augmented by hotel guests and curious passers-by—pressed in to jam the hotel parlor until it was bulging.

In that high but penetrating voice of his, Taft began to read the agreement that had been reached between the two generals—one with five stars and one with none at all.

There would be, Taft announced firmly, no discrimination in appointments nor reprisals by the new administration against the Ohio senator's supporters. He and Eisenhower had agreed the budget must be pared down from eighty billion dollars, where Truman and the Korean War had elevated it, to sixty billion dollars within two years. This would pave the way for a reduction in taxes. The basic principles of the Taft-Hartley Act would be preserved. There would be no countenancing of "creeping socialism."

"The price of liberty, including the free economic system," Taft droned on nasally, "is the reduction of federal spending and taxes, *the repudiation of arbitrary powers in the executive, claimed to be derived from Heaven*, and the stand against the statutory extension of power by the creation and extension of federal bureaus; the protection of the people against any arbitrary excess of power which may be developed by big business or by big labor or other pressure groups is also essential."

This was pure Taftian phrasing and philosophy, as everybody present knew. When Taft said it was also Eisenhower's, there followed no public dissent from the general. With his usual frankness, however, Taft made it clear the truce held only for domestic issues.

"I cannot say that I agree with all of General Eisenhower's

views on foreign policy to be pursued in Europe and the rest of the world," he said, "but I think it is fair to say that the differences are differences of degree."

Just how wide were these "differences of degree" and how embarrassing they might become to a President were to be demonstrated when Eisenhower occupied the White House, with Taft entrenched behind a conservative barricade that was to remain intact on Capitol Hill long after the man who erected it had passed.

For Taft was to remain, even in death, a symbol of the powerful conservative wing of the Republican party which stood ready to resist change. If, in modern times, the old guard could never quite manage to nominate one of its own for President, its congressional members were quite capable of thwarting a Republican President's efforts to "modernize" his party.

After the "surrender" Taft himself came to regard Eisenhower as a man who might become a true conservative if he had the right guidance. But the Ohio senator harbored a great mistrust of the men who had engineered Eisenhower's nomination—men like Dewey, Governor Sherman Adams of New Hampshire, General Lucius D. Clay, Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., and Paul Hoffman.

Taft reasoned that these men could influence Eisenhower to spend more money at home and abroad than the senator would countenance. Among Taft's blind spots, and he had several, was his insistence that budgetary matters at all times must be supreme. It was, in fact, a matter of money that sparked his first memorable flare-up with the general after the latter had been installed as President.

President Truman had sent Congress a farewell seventy-eight and a half billion-dollar budget in January of 1953. Taft promptly denounced it, amid loud protests from other Republicans and from conservative Democrats, and Eisenhower and his fiscal experts began a hurried effort to trim this down to a size befitting a Republican President.

The GOP experts found the going rough, however. They had talked for years about the "scandalous" budgets Truman was submitting. They had harangued the country on the issue of excess-

sive government spending. They were experts on criticism. But when it came to cutting, the story was different. Consequently when Taft and the other Republican congressional leaders were called to the White House to view the results, Taft hit the ceiling at the seventy-four billion-dollar total Eisenhower had approved.

This, said Taft, with the irritated vigor he could summon on such occasions, was no way to demonstrate that the Republicans were for economy in government or were making serious efforts to balance the budget. He reminded Eisenhower that during the campaign both of them had made budget balancing the chief goal of the Republicans.

As he warmed to the subject, Taft's face flushed and his anger boiled over. Finally, pounding his fist on Eisenhower's desk, Taft fairly shouted at the President:

"If you have this kind of a budget, you'll never elect a Republican Congress in 1954."

Although he was taken aback Eisenhower curiously was more impressed than angry. His respect for Taft was growing as well as his disposition to let the Ohio senator have his own way in Congress.

There was a revealing footnote to this dressing-down of a President by a senator. A White House staff member told friends—including some newspapermen—that Taft ought not to be allowed to get away with bawling out the President. Somehow this story got back to Eisenhower and he called his underling on the carpet. Thoroughly irritated, as he could get at times, Eisenhower told the shaken official he never again wanted to hear that any of his associates had said anything derogatory about Taft.

As their relations became closer, Taft developed a parental feeling toward Eisenhower. Taft, the veteran who felt he should have been President, would point out to Eisenhower, the pupil, the snares ahead and guide him along the safe Republican paths.

There was no resentment within Taft toward the man who had snatched from him life's greatest jewel, the presidency. Even as a wide-eyed, shy lad in the White House while his father was President, there had been ingrained in Taft a strong sense of dynasty.

One day when we were chatting, Taft fell into reminiscences of the golden era when his father was President and the younger man had popped in and out of the White House on weekends away from Yale. In the long summer vacations he could watch, fascinated, the intricate inner operations of government.

It was not so much what Taft said, which was unimportant, but the glow in his eyes as he said it that revealed the tremendous urge which had shaped the life of the wispy-haired man with the wide, protruding mouth who sat across the desk.

The Tafts had been born to be Presidents, just as had the Adamses. Why else had Bob Taft been endowed with a quicker, more analytical, and more retentive mind than his fellows in the political field? Why else had he been given the seemingly inexhaustible physical vigor that could carry his large frame striding long hours through the halls of the Capitol and yet leave him fresh at night to take apart every major bill, and many minor ones, likely to come before the Senate?

Why else should he condone in preconvention campaigns for the presidential nomination the kind of political baggery in his behalf he privately viewed with disgust? Why else should he endure the drudgery of shaking countless hands and listening to the cackling of stupid men in endless campaigns? For the presidency anything was endurable.

But Taft was a realist; the presidency would not be his. Quietly, if not stoically, this greatest of the also-rans could bury life's ambition and go about the matter-of-fact business at hand. Of course he thought that at Chicago the Republican party had made a mistake, not only for its own sake but for the country's. But in defeat there was no doubt among his friends that at last a peace beyond his own understanding had come to Taft.

He now knew he never would be President. So be it. There were other, if lesser, things to be accomplished. He would, he vowed to himself and others, do his level best to make the new administration a shining example of Republicanism for generations to come.

Taft felt—and he was gentle and kind about it—that Eisenhower knew little about using the political tools at his disposal. Eisen-

hower, the novice, must be led into the paths of conservatism and must be taught how to fight for Republican righteousness. Taft was the high priest for this crusade because his were the roots that ran deep in the Republican party where Eisenhower had none.

In the remotest corner of Taft's mind there never lurked any doubt that he knew best how to make the administration a success. With all the confidence of a man dialing his own telephone number, Taft could provide matter-of-fact answers for every problem that arose. He was incapable of entertaining the vaguest suspicion that he might be mistaken in his general course; in details, at times perhaps, but in objectives, never.

"Socialism" to him was a hated word. Government must do the barest possible minimum for the people, else they would lose their individual initiative. The poor we would have with us always and they must be cared for. Social security unfortunately was here to stay. There was room for long-range housing and health programs, but there must be no paternal functioning of the federal system.

Taxes and debt were overbearing. The greatest threat to American security was from socialism within, not from aggressive communism from without. It made no sense to subsidize Allied governments so they could reduce taxes on their own people. Maintaining troops around the world was wasteful and futile. A strong air force would forestall any military strike at America. The rest of the world was not so important to the country's future as it had been pictured.

This, then, was the philosophy of government that Taft would help the politically inexperienced man in the White House to understand and to embrace. This was Taft's way. If it was not also Eisenhower's—and we shall see that in some important respects it was not—that would be a temporary annoyance to be overcome.

From his seat of power in Congress, Taft would employ the sheer logistics of putting a Republican program into operation to win Eisenhower away from the Deweys, the Adamses, the Hoffmans, the Lodges, and the Clays. The President might propose but Congress would dispose. And Taft would take care of the disposing.

In the waning months of his life, Taft performed some yeoman services for the new Republican President in a Congress that the party controlled by a whisker. At the same time, the Ohioan busied himself hacking away at foreign-policy decisions, lending his support to a four and a half billion-dollar cut in presidential money requests and in encouraging Wisconsin's rampaging Republican Senator Joseph R. McCarthy in investigations that were embarrassing and painful to the GOP administration.

Taft felt no compulsion to leave the field of foreign affairs to Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. In less than six weeks after the new President took office, the Ohio senator began firing pot shots at the administration's conduct of international relations.

Taft said the entire conduct of the Korean War could stand "pretty full investigation." He suggested the administration ought to "settle all of the questions of the Far East in one bite." Engaged in efforts to get a Korean truce, Eisenhower and Dulles were distressed by this kind of sniping from the rear. Taft added to their discomfiture with a statement that any settlement would be "unsatisfactory" that left a divided Korea, although it had become thoroughly apparent by that time that the only hope for a truce lay in such a division.

Dulles had managed to turn away most of these Taft forays while Eisenhower remained silent. But on May 26, 1953, the Ohio senator unloaded a political A-bomb on the administration.

Taft himself was in a Cincinnati hospital, undergoing the final tests which disclosed that he had cancer, and he sent his handsome, strapping son, Robert A. Taft, Jr., to read for him a long-scheduled speech at a conference of Christians and Jews.

Young Bob Taft, a little astounded himself, read to a dismayed audience a suggestion that it was about time for the United States to forget about the United Nations and to go it alone in Korea.

"We might as well abandon any idea of working with the U.N. in the Far East and reserve to ourselves a completely free hand," the senator said. He added he saw little value in continuing to maintain U.S. troops in Europe and Asia, but he avoided any

mention of what the Communists might do if such troop withdrawals were forthcoming.

This was too much for Eisenhower and Dulles. But the President was in a quandary. Because of the power he had yielded to Taft at Morningside Heights and subsequently, Eisenhower's was not the only national voice bespeaking over-all policy to the country. Taft's was nearly as loud, if sometimes not more so.

Reluctantly and hesitantly, Eisenhower decided he must risk the senator's possible retaliation and speak out. He said publicly that Taft's go-it-alone views, which had given America's allies the jitters, were not those of the administration. Behind the scenes, the administration, fearful of Taft's reaction, hurriedly dispatched its liaison men to plead with the Ohio senator not to push over the precariously tipped apple cart of international relations. Ill and tired, Taft relented, lapsing into temporary silence.

If Taft's cantankerous comments on international policies could be glossed over as pardonable aberrations of a party leader otherwise dedicated to support of the President, the Ohioan's encouragement of administration-harassing investigations could not be dismissed so readily.

The truth of the matter was that Taft could have stepped on McCarthy at almost any point and squashed him. Powerful as McCarthy became—and he came to challenge the President openly—the Wisconsin senator could not long have continued his bruising ways without the tacit approval of his Ohio colleague.

Taft had been more amused than anything else when the McCarthy phenomenon began on February 9, 1950. At Wheeling, West Virginia, the senator from Wisconsin told a rather well-attended political meeting:

"I have in my hand fifty-seven cases of individuals who would appear to be either card-carrying members or certainly loyal to the Communist party but who, nevertheless, are helping to shape our foreign policy."

McCarthy had been known as a rough-and-tumble campaigner who had disposed of Senator Robert M. LaFollette, Jr., in a Wisconsin Republican senatorial primary in which the left-wing wards of Milwaukee had gone for McCarthy. As a senator, Mc-

Carthy had done little to distinguish himself until he accidentally stepped into a manhole left uncovered by the Republican National Committee and came out smelling like a crusader.

From data in the records of a House Appropriations subcommittee hearing of two years earlier, the National Committee had exhumed information for a speech about alleged Communist infiltration in the State Department. The Republican committee had handed this to McCarthy for one of a series of campaign talks he had agreed to make in several states where the party was trying to elect senators.

It is not recorded that McCarthy ever gave the speech much thought until he eased his broad-shouldered frame into his seat on an airliner bound for Wheeling. Nor was there any evidence McCarthy had any idea he was about to embark on a controversial new political career.

The unsupported charges McCarthy voiced that day in Wheeling burst on the public with little less force than the atomic bomb the Soviets had just tested. They hit home to a people vastly disturbed by the implications of Alger Hiss's conviction. Hiss, a former State Department official, had been found guilty of perjury in his denial that he ever passed secret State Department papers to a Communist courier. At the time, Judith Coplon, a government girl later freed, was on trial for espionage, and the people might have been excused if they looked under their beds at night in search of a spy.

Through nearly four years of spectacular strife, McCarthy climbed the "Communist-in-government" ladder, blasting publicly at a Democratic President, sneering privately at a Republican President, and cauterizing a Republican Secretary of the Army. Calling his critics either "Communists" or "Communist coddlers," McCarthy rampaged across the country hanging a "twenty years of treason" label on the Democrats and it was not long before he was saying the Eisenhower administration was guilty of continuing this "treason."

McCarthy had greeted the inauguration of the new administration with a spectacular investigation of the Voice of America, U.S. overseas-propaganda agency. The monkeyshines of McCarthy's

investigators in Europe set the whole world talking about this ludicrous but nevertheless fearsome thing that was occurring in America.

At this critical point, when his weight would have been decisive if he had thrown it on the other side, Taft chose to lend his prestige to McCarthy. The Ohioan said his Wisconsin colleague was doing a needed thing in his investigation. When McCarthy demanded that Dulles fire the Voice of America staff, Taft joined in the cry with the observation that he felt the staff was "full of fellow travelers."

Thus were encouraged the growing McCarthy assaults on the GOP administration. They were to culminate late in the year in a televised attack on Eisenhower's foreign policies. The man that Taft would not stop was to declare that he, McCarthy—and not the administration's record—was the principal issue in the 1954 congressional election.

Eisenhower refused to fight back and in what was to become something of a characteristic gesture, he chose to turn the other cheek to McCarthy. The President told news-conference questioners he never engaged in controversy with individuals. He elected a course of patience, but he was quoted as saying privately: "I will not get down in the gutter with that guy."

There would have been no need for presidential action if Taft had moved to pinch off McCarthy's activities. Had he lived, Taft perhaps might have reacted adversely to the spectacular Army-McCarthy investigation that drove a Secretary of the Army out of office but turned up no new Communists.

As we reporters well knew, Taft never had taken much stock in McCarthy's charges despite his public support for the Wisconsin senator. But Taft had long been of the opinion there were not enough hell-raisers in the Republican party. So long as McCarthy could make the Democrats squirm, the Ohio senator was perfectly willing to let his colleague roughhouse the opposition. Whether the tactics being used were entirely fair was less important than the evident political results being achieved.

That Taft would not employ the means at his command to gag McCarthy when the latter's anger was turned upon the Eisen-

hower Republicans was one of the things Taft never satisfactorily explained, beyond the obvious fact that he was inclined to regard the party's liberals—but not the President—as enemies akin to the left-wing Democrats. If they hurt a little along with the Democrats, that was all right with the Ohioan.

Where Taft condoned and Eisenhower hesitated, the voters saw to it that McCarthy would not remain as the powerful chairman of the Senate's Permanent Investigating subcommittee. At the polls they returned control of both houses of Congress to the Democrats in the 1954 elections.

In two years after the surrender at Morningside Heights the wheel had turned relentlessly. Eisenhower had lost the initiative in dealing with Congress, where the Taft wing had nailed down the GOP seats of power. The opportunity to revitalize the Republican party was ebbing away. The President's mandate of the 1952 election landslide to speak with the voice of the nation was being challenged in both foreign and domestic fields.

And the Congress which Eisenhower had surrendered to Taft now had to be surrendered to the Democrats.

## 2 The Inherent Conflict



"McCarthy's up! McCarthy's up!"

The cry rang down the littered working quarters of the Senate press gallery. It rolled up against the chattering clatter of the teletypes and died in the hurried shuffling of feet as we newsmen piled through the swinging doors into the seats overlooking the Senate floor. There we perched to watch the censured and discredited senator from Wisconsin put on his first show in the new Congress the Democrats now commanded.

Below on the floor the bull-necked McCarthy, his face pale with illness, was speaking in that familiar voice that rasped like a file. Senator William Knowland of California, now the Republican leader, turned, twisted, fidgeted, seemed ill at ease. Farther back Senator Styles Bridges of New Hampshire sat half smiling, occasionally nodding his head in approval as McCarthy spoke.

His eyes glazed with emotion, McCarthy was laying down a systematic attack on the President of the United States—his party's President. He was blaming Eisenhower for loss of control of the Senate to the Democrats by the slim margin of one vote—a turn of events that had cost McCarthy his cherished investigating chairmanship. Without that chairmanship there would be no revenge against those in the Senate who had brought him to heel. Eisenhower had had little to do with the election outcome; no hand in the Senate's censure action against McCarthy. Nevertheless, the Wisconsin senator was aiming, as he always did, at the bull's-eye of the target.

"This year, I believe for the first time in history," McCarthy said with venom, "we saw the President trying to purge a member of his own party after the primary."

Pausing momentarily for emphasis, McCarthy reminded his colleagues that if Herman Welker, the Republican isolationist from Idaho, had not been defeated, the GOP would still control the

Senate. The manifest implication was that the defeat of Welker by Democrat Frank Church, a youthful internationalist, had cost the "real" Republicans a valuable asset—McCarthy at the helm of a wide-swinging investigation.

With a generous measure of the illogic for which he was notorious, McCarthy called attention to a magazine article in which Paul G. Hoffman, former foreign-aid administrator, had referred to Welker as "a man of dangerous thinking and reckless conduct." While Democrats smiled slyly at each other, McCarthy shrilled that Hoffman had no place in the Republican party and that his statement would have carried no weight if Eisenhower had not "placed his stamp of approval" on the article at a news conference.

"No," McCarthy boomed, "the control of the Senate today by the Democrats is the direct responsibility of a so-called Republican President. Eisenhower did not do it inadvertently. He did it deliberately. He knew what he was doing."

At this point McCarthy ran out of time under a unanimous-consent agreement limiting debate. Senator Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas, the Democratic leader, controlled the time; he was happy to give McCarthy more of it.

The Wisconsin senator said Welker had supported most of Eisenhower's domestic proposals, a claim that even McCarthy had to agree was open to some argument. In any event, McCarthy added, Welker was, by all odds, "an outspoken and hard-hitting fighter in the campaign to root Communists out of government."

"For that, too," McCarthy intoned deeply and dramatically, "he is considered a man of dangerous thinking and reckless conduct. For that, too, he was purged."

Republicans had been sitting silently but this was a little more than Knowland could swallow. When McCarthy's last bitter syllable had died away, Knowland hoisted his big, bulging frame from his front-row seat to take issue with the man he had voted to defend when the Senate censured McCarthy's conduct.

Standing like a square granite block in the center aisle, Knowland said soberly and ponderously he wanted to keep the record straight. He himself had made speeches for Welker in Idaho, Knowland said. Moreover, in the course of one of these he had

read a letter from Eisenhower commendatory to Welker, supporting the latter's re-election bid. Knowland said this and sat down.

Turning on his erstwhile Senate friend, McCarthy lashed out with the retort that Eisenhower "may have written some milk-and-water letter to try to absolve himself, but he sent the direct word down the line that Herman Welker was not a good Republican."

Some of Eisenhower's associates might have cheered if this actually had been true. But there was no indication that the Republican President had bothered about Welker's fate except to listen to the entreaties of party campaign workers who wanted to enlist presidential efforts in the fight to save the Senate for the Republicans.

As we leaned over the front-row shelves of the press gallery, we could see Johnson winking covertly and knowingly to the other Democrats sitting smugly listening to the swish of the knife as a Republican cut freely at a President for whom no defender arose except Knowland.

McCarthy warmed to the attack. He whined that "the White House palace guard encouraged the raising of money in New York to be sent into Idaho to defeat Welker and elect a Democrat."

Knowland, who had been chewing over all of the aspects of this unexpected assault on the President—for McCarthy disdained consultation with his colleagues when he was preparing such attacks—lumbered to his feet again to observe that he didn't approve of the Hoffman article. By that time an assistant had brought him a copy of Eisenhower's "Dear Herman" letter and Knowland read it.

The President could not quite bring himself to go all out for Welker as the Republican campaigners had hoped. Instead, Eisenhower told Welker in faint praise that "little recognition has been given to the many times you have wholeheartedly supported the Administration in advancing key parts of its program."

Knowland told his colleagues he didn't think the Hoffman article "represents the views of the President of the United States."

"In the meantime," he added, "I did not want any unfairness to be implied to the President of the United States."

This was the Knowland of responsibility, a grim-visaged mastodon with convictions and the courage to back them up. Here was Taft's unwanted legacy to the Eisenhower administration, a man who would be fair to friend and foe but who was not more likely than Taft to wear any man's collar, including the President's. Armed with a fierce integrity and a deep devotion to his country, Knowland would plow his own furrow. If it ran parallel to administration efforts, well and good. If it did not, that was regrettable, but not something to worry about for long.

The short measure of Eisenhower's real strength in the Senate was put on public view in those critical fifteen minutes when the cornered McCarthy swung for the political belt line and there was none but Knowland to defend the President. The Republicans who owed far greater allegiance to Eisenhower than the senator from California were silent.

As if to emphasize the general's weakness with his own troops, Bridges walked conspicuously over to McCarthy and smilingly shook hands.

Taft was gone, leaving the terms of the Morningside Heights surrender in the hands of Knowland. As a successor to the great man, Knowland might not measure up to the Ohioan in the ability to influence Congress, but he was no less determined in his conservatism. If there had ever been any hope that Eisenhower could bring about the choice of a leader who would follow the President's wishes—as Franklin Roosevelt once had been able to do—it had vanished long before.

Knowland's audacity, awkward though it often was, and his tenacity had made him Taft's choice as his successor when the Ohioan found it impossible to carry on as party leader because of his physical condition.

Characteristically, Knowland had bulled his way into a situation where Republican senators with more seniority had feared to tread. After the 1952 election of Eisenhower, Taft had decided he wanted to become the party's Senate floor leader. Taft hated the necessity of being chained by routine to the leadership chair, but as he told me on one occasion, he wanted to be the man with whom Eisenhower would deal at weekly White House confer-

ences in which the GOP legislative leaders discussed the administration's program with the President.

Taft had kept his plans to himself so Knowland announced shortly after the 1952 election he was a candidate for majority leader of the Senate the Republicans would control in January 1953. When Taft's desires became known, Knowland obstinately refused to step aside. Taft could have crushed his California rival in any test vote among the Senate Republicans, but the Ohioan was not one to deny an up-and-coming youngster a place in the sun. Besides, Taft had no taste at that point for intra-squad fighting when he wasn't sure how hard he would have to battle the man in the White House to get Taft's way. So the elder statesman quietly arranged to give the upstart Californian the chairmanship of the party's Senate Policy Committee. It was a title that meant little, since Taft made Republican Senate policy, but it put Knowland on the list of the favored few who would see the President every week.

It was only natural then, as his illness began to make it impossible for him to continue, that Taft should turn to Knowland as a replacement. In Taft's estimation, Knowland's views on most major issues were similar to his own.

Late on the afternoon of June 9, 1955, Taft hobbled into the office of Senator Bridges, then the president pro tempore of the Senate. Sinking into a chair, Taft said with a sigh:

"I'm going away and I've asked Bill to carry on for me. Nobody can push him around."

Taft's meaning was not lost on Bridges, an acute political manipulator. Eisenhower would not push Knowland around. The White House would not dominate the Senate, and through it the Congress, by the accident of Taft's illness. Bridges was pleased.

As the new acting leader took over, it became immediately clear he would not be gagged by anyone, including the President himself. The corrugated-browed, frowning Knowland demonstrated quickly that he was his own man.

To put things straight, Knowland said he was not "an administrative Cabinet official who can be appointed and dismissed at will by the President." Neither, he said, was he "an army officer who

can be disciplined by the commanding general." If Eisenhower secretly admired Taft's blunt-spoken ways, he usually felt ill at ease with the dogged Knowland who pursued his own ideas without its occurring to him that he might be trespassing on a field the President should have staked out as his own—but did not.

As Knowland saw his job, it was to translate to Eisenhower the views of other Republican senators and in turn to interpret the President's position to the senators. Having done this, Knowland considered that he had fulfilled his responsibilities. He then was free to attack any policies with which he disagreed. While he might cite a high percentage of support for Eisenhower's proposals, those he opposed often counted the most.

Woodrow Wilson lost the peace after World War I because he lost contact with the men in the Senate who might have helped him combat the vicious enmity of aging Henry Cabot Lodge, Sr. In Wilson's case, the enemy was recognizable, since he wore another political uniform.

In Eisenhower's case, the enemy sometimes wore the blue of the Republican party. Eisenhower had little to fear from the onslaughts of the gray-clad troops of Senator Johnson. But the President had no protection from the fusillade that might be poured on him from his own right flank.

The firing from the right always seemed to break out at the most inopportune times and places. If Secretary Dulles was engaged in particularly delicate negotiations in the Far East, Knowland was likely to erupt with a strong statement to the effect that the United States should support Chiang Kai-shek's forlorn and probably unattainable ambition to return to the China mainland. Knowland would call for an impossible blockade of Communist China. He would continue to denounce the settlement in Korea, to the embarrassment of the President.

When Britain, France, and Israel had secretly connived to seize the Suez Canal and had left Eisenhower and Dulles in the dark on their plans, Knowland stepped in with a heavy foot to tread on the Eisenhower-Dulles position. Dulles, rocking back and forth with hands in pockets, spoke at a news conference of possible sanctions against Israel, and Knowland reacted quickly.

A telephone rang in the press gallery and Knowland was on the line when I answered.

"Jack," he said, "if you want to come down to my office, I'd like to give you a statement I think you might be interested in."

A floor below, near the center of the Capitol, the Senate's Republican leader had his office in a room where the Supreme Court justices once had robed in the days before their marble building was built across the Capitol square.

Sitting grim-faced at his mahogany desk, Knowland read a penciled statement saying it was "immoral" for the United States even to consider the sanctions against Israel. Dulles had said only that sanctions were under contemplation and undoubtedly he was bluffing, but his bluff didn't clear the shore line. Knowland was there to shoot down the balloon before it rose above the horizon's edge.

If Eisenhower had elected to fight instead of knuckling under to Taft at Morningside Heights, he might have saved for his administration the initiative in situations such as this. He could hardly have been worse off, as Knowland, Taft's legatee, continued to prove in the years of frustration and indecision that followed before he bowed voluntarily out of the Senate for an unsuccessful race for governor of California in 1958.

Again and again, Knowland's bulldozing tactics hit with shattering impact on the President's foreign-policy course.

Witness the incident in 1958 when Eisenhower asked Congress for authority to extend American aid to Iron Curtain countries. Senator John F. Kennedy, Massachusetts Democrat, was sharpshooting every angle in his bid for the 1960 Democratic presidential nomination. Here was a field in which Kennedy had prepared himself carefully and he came up with a proposal Eisenhower and Dulles approved after minor word changes. Knowland was absent, campaigning futilely in California for that state's governorship, when the Kennedy amendment came before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The committee approved the proposal and it went before the Senate.

Returning to Washington, Knowland quickly brought himself up to date. He told William Macomber, an Assistant Secretary of

State, in no uncertain language that foreign-aid appropriations were going to be reduced drastically if Kennedy's proposal carried. Macomber was on his own because Dulles was in Duck Island, Ontario, Canada, taking a brief respite from the cares of Washington.

Undersecretary of State Christian A. Herter and his economic deputy, Douglas Dillon, agreed as a compromise they would support the Kennedy proposal in principle but would leave the implementing language up to Congress. Informed of this, Knowland stormily demanded a meeting with the President and got it the next morning. He told Eisenhower that Kennedy was trying to open the floodgates of aid to Communist countries and demanded that Eisenhower repudiate the commitment to Kennedy.

The President, who lacked detailed information on the matter, capitulated. Eisenhower said he had no objection if the Kennedy amendment to the foreign-aid bill were scuttled. It would be all right with him, the President added, if the matter were handled in some other legislative measure. Of course, it never was.

After he had been beaten on a 43 to 42 roll-call vote in the Senate, Kennedy inquired acidly: "Who is running our foreign policy, President Eisenhower or Senator Knowland?" At that point, there was some doubt.

Earlier there had been considerable rejoicing among the President's adherents when the Senate failed by one vote to give approval to a proposal by Senator John Bricker, Ohio Republican, for a constitutional amendment curtailing the President's treaty-making powers. Knowland had been on the side of Bricker when the latter just missed getting the required approval of two thirds of those voting. This test displayed Eisenhower's fatal weakness—rather than his dubious strength—in the Senate where he needed so sorely to have support if he was to maintain world peace and to be the guiding inspiration of American progress.

When we questioned Eisenhower at news conferences about the obvious wounds that were being inflicted upon him by the Senate's inherited Republican leader, the President was charitable beyond any political need. His pat answer was that he didn't believe there were any fundamental differences between him and

the party's Senate leader. It was only a difference of methods, Eisenhower said rather plaintively.

In mid-1957 when the columnists were laying down a barrage against Knowland and suggesting he ought to resign because he opposed so many of the President's requests, Eisenhower said placidly that the organization of the parties within the Senate was the Senators' own business.

"It has never even crossed my mind to ask the resignation of anybody," the President said, "because they are not direct subordinates of mine."

Eisenhower conceded that Knowland had "differed with me on some very important points and I think some of them are critical and they represent real differences, but it does not mean that he is my enemy: it means that he has got some very strong convictions on the other side of the fence."

The President went on to say that he would never go behind the backs of his party's congressional leaders. If he wanted to talk with other Republicans in the "quiet conversational way" he felt was most effective in drumming up support for his legislative program, he would inform the leaders what he was doing.

"I am not one of the desk-pounding type that likes to stick out his jaw and look like he is bossing the show," Eisenhower said. "I would far rather get behind, and recognizing the frailties and requirements of human nature, I would rather try to persuade a man to go along, because once I have persuaded him, he will stick. If I scare him, he will stay just as long as he is scared and then he is gone."

We laughed merrily at this sally, as one does when a President displays a bit of humor. Eisenhower's logic seemed in order, but many of us wondered if he were quite as efficient a persuader as he assumed. Perhaps during World War II he had been able to coax Churchill and perhaps he had been able to mollify de Gaulle. But now, in the average American estimation, he was batting in a faster league.

These were sharpshtooting politicians he was dealing with, politicians who were able to count rather accurately the number of

divisions the President commanded—and often they were not many.

Moreover, there was little evidence Eisenhower had been able to penetrate the hard shell of many of the politicians on Capitol Hill. This man obviously lacked the power of Franklin Roosevelt to mesmerize a critic or to charm an opponent into acquiescence. There was, in fact, a kind of frostiness in the President which kept at arms' length all those who did not move intimately in his world of bridge and golf or were not, like Dulles, in the old-shoe category of daily conferees on public matters.

Executive department officials were likely to freeze in his presence. Congress members sometimes were uncomfortable. He was not, in a word, an easy man to cozy up to. Even Sherman Adams, of whom we shall hear much more later, found in the President a boss who was distant and formal in his relations with the man who was generally credited with shouldering many presidential burdens.

Nowhere in the Eisenhower operations was to be found the homey, earthy, cuss-word appeal to the common man of a Harry Truman. As he had been trained through a long army career, Eisenhower was the commanding general who found it unwise to fraternize too freely with the loyal troops.

Members of Congress who discussed legislative matters with Eisenhower were likely to come away feeling that a sincere man who was devoted to his country had outlined to them a series of rather logical reasons why they ought to support the things he stood for. They liked and respected this man, but they felt no passionate compulsion to risk their political necks in his cause.

Somewhere there was lacking the indefinable something that made men stand up and be counted—at times against their own better judgment. It could be said that Eisenhower almost never got the support of a man whose better judgment dictated an opposite course. Thus multiplied were the corollaries of his surrender of Congress to other hands.

There was an unexpected saving element, however. Where Knowland lacked finesse and Eisenhower lacked experience, the amazing Senator Johnson, a drawling Texas Democrat, filled in

some of the chinks. The moderate-minded Johnson, as a matter of fact, often made Eisenhower look better in his relations with the legislative branch than the President had any right to do.

A tall but not taciturn Texan with an inward drive that even a heart attack could not diminish, Johnson accomplished the amazing feat of rescuing many of Eisenhower's foreign-policy proposals from the abyss of defeat by the Republican-Democratic coalition that functioned in opposition to most programs which involved spending money. On lesser issues, on the other hand, Johnson often busied himself upsetting the GOP administration's apple cart, as though he felt called upon to demonstrate he could be a partisan Democrat when he chose.

Eisenhower talked often in campaigns about the necessity of having a Republican Congress. It was Johnson's contention that with a Republican President the country was better off with a Democratic Congress. After two years with the GOP in control of the two Houses, the voters agreed with Johnson in 1956 and pushed the Democratic majorities substantially higher in 1958.

Often when we gathered in his pretentious office off the Senate floor in the Capitol, the thought came to us that if this lean, intense, mouth-puckering man who fidgeted behind his broad mahogany desk had only been on the other side of the political fence, Eisenhower might have attained a higher rung on the presidential ladder than history was likely to accord him.

For Johnson had a knack that was foreign to Knowland of getting men together. The Texan was a compromiser in the tradition of Henry Clay. Heading a party that was split down the middle on such issues as civil rights, he somehow managed to convince all of his followers that unity could pay profitable dividends on special occasions.

If Eisenhower had had in the Senate the type of vitriolic opposition contributed by a Henry Cabot Lodge, his relations with Congress might have ended in the shambles that marked the close of Woodrow Wilson's second term. But Eisenhower was luckier in that respect than many of his predecessors.

Amiable, knowledgeable, powerful Sam Rayburn of Texas ran the House as its Speaker. A conservative Democrat, Rayburn re-

garded the President with personal affection but sorrowed at some of Eisenhower's peregrinations from the accustomed course of politics.

In the Senate was Johnson, a personally reasonable man who bore the President no slightest ill will and who made a fetish of his non-partisan devotion to the country's best interests. It is not overstatement to say that despite the war-hero legend that enveloped him, Eisenhower might have been easy prey to opposition leaders of lesser vision.

Almost singlehandedly Johnson curbed in the Senate the kind of carping, petty opposition criticism in which Republican leaders had indulged in long years of the Roosevelt and Truman administrations. The Democratic leader, of course, could not soft-pedal the acid-tongued Senator Robert S. Kerr of Oklahoma. Nor did he ever lay a restraining finger publicly on the unpredictable Senator Wayne Morse of Oregon. At times, Johnson even appeared in the public view to be egging on these dive-bombing critics of the Republican President.

When I asked him one day to explain this curious zig and zag between protection of the Republican President and partisan raids on the administration, Johnson's answer was that of the practical politician who must live with his own forces while directing long-range strategy he believes will win a partisan war.

"I never oppose the President just to be opposing," Johnson said. "I never start a fight with him unless I think I can win it. If I think I can lick the President on something he ought to be licked on, I try like hell to do it."

But Johnson's theme song was "responsibility." His overriding mission in life was to present the Democratic party as the instrument most likely to preserve the nation's security and its prosperity. If this also impressed upon the public mind the belief that Johnson, the individual, was a rather tremendous fellow in his own right, the subsidiary results would not be rejected.

There was about this man who protected Eisenhower when Republicans deserted the President a quality of impatience with fools and charlatans which belied his own ill-concealed ego and his penchant toward reaching for headlines that demonstrated to

his satisfaction what a great man Johnson was. However, he never let this quality of needing to be praised interfere seriously with his attention to what he conceived to be the best interests of his country.

Even Vice-President Richard M. Nixon, who had no reason to love Johnson, praised the Democratic leader in private conversations as a great American, who put country above party.

More than any other politician Johnson made it possible for Eisenhower to preserve for more than six years the fiction that he was a "constitutional" President, as George Washington had been, rising above partisanship and the petty quarrels of the day.

Eisenhower had devoted more study to Washington than any of the other Presidents and it was natural that the general should feel that as a man who had kept himself divorced from partisan strife for most of his life he could emulate Washington's position as an impartial administrator of the nation's affairs.

In his discussions during the 1952 election campaign of ending "executive usurpations of power" and of the need to "restore Congress to its rightful place in the government" Eisenhower had reflected not only the views in the joint statement he had signed with Taft at Morningside Heights but his admiration for the legend of Washington.

Perhaps it had escaped Eisenhower's attention that Washington was not as far removed from the crass realities of his day as a cursory perusal of the history books might indicate.

Washington was a personally cold man who, like Eisenhower, resented any intrusion on his privacy. Even Gouverneur Morris was brought up with an icy stare when he once took the liberty of clapping the first President on the back.

The Father of his Country was a great stickler for pomp and circumstance. When he received formally on Tuesdays with Congress in session, Washington wore velvet knee breeches, yellow gloves, slippers with gold buckles, a sword in a white leather scabbard, and carried an ostrich-plumed cocked hat bearing the Federalists' black cockade symbol. On Friday nights, when Mrs. Washington entertained, however, the general relaxed and usu-

ally was surrounded with pretty girls whom he enjoyed engaging in conversation.

The first President had no use for political parties, a view that seemed to be a criterion of statesmanship in his day. As a matter of fact, he once suggested that "self-created" political societies ought to be broken up forcefully by the government.

His non-partisan attitude, so like that of Eisenhower, did not protect Washington from some rather vigorous criticism. Andrew Jackson said at one point that the President ought to be impeached for signing the Jay Treaty in which the United States promised, among other things, not to export cotton in its own ships.

Senator William Maclay of Pennsylvania wrote bitterly in his diary: "If there is treason in the wish, I retract it, but would to God this same General Washington were in Heaven. We would not then have him brought forward as the constant cover to every unconstitutional and irrepublican act."

Maclay's complaint merely reflected the resentment in Congress of the practical measures Washington was condoning to control the legislative branch. His agent in this instance was the slight, youthful-appearing but fiery Alexander Hamilton.

In the act of creating the Department of the Treasury, Hamilton and all of his successors had been given a special dispensation to keep in close touch with Congress. The Secretary was instructed to "make reports and give information to either branch of the legislature in person or in writing as may be required. . . ." But Congress never expected the Secretary to direct it what to do.

Washington had had one embarrassing experience with Congress when he made a personal appearance before the Senate to present a treaty. The first President had been treated with little courtesy. It was not remarkable that he chose to deal with the congressional unwashed through an agent, and in his role as unofficial prime minister Hamilton was an expert manipulator.

Hamilton ground down the opposition in Congress to fund the bankrupt country's debts, establish tariffs and excises, and set up a Bank of the United States. His influence was so great that

Macay recorded in a diary entry: "Congress may go home. Mr. Hamilton is all-powerful and fails in nothing he attempts."

Thus, even in the beginning was undermined the theory that the President might stand aloof from the common clatter of the nation's business. And as time marched on it became clearly evident that the high plateaus of American history would not be trod by Presidents who merely carried out the laws Congress passed. Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Wilson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Truman all were chief executives who dominated or defied Congress. On the other hand, the somber valleys of America's destiny were marked by congressional domination of the national scene, when weak or incompetent executives were buffeted into submission by the lawmakers.

The lesson of Hamilton's accomplishments was not lost on his caustic enemy, Thomas Jefferson, the tall, freckle-faced "red-headed radical" from Virginia who introduced party politics into the presidency. Where Hamilton, despite his brilliance, had failed to rally a personal political following, Jefferson had welded the agrarians of the expanding West with the common people of the seaboard into a Republican contingent to contest the high-and-mighty Federalists with their royal airs.

It was a motley crew Jefferson had assembled into a semblance of a political party. He brought the Society of St. Tammany, which had been organized in 1789 by William Mooney as a fraternal order of laborers, artisans, and mechanics, into league with the southern planters, the farmers, and frontiersmen. Genêt's Radical Democratic societies joined up, as well as many of the original opponents of the Constitution.

Jefferson and James Madison had forged links with Governor George Clinton of New York and with Aaron Burr in a "botanizing" trip through New England during which the two wayfarers were arrested in Vermont for violating a state "blue law" by riding in a carriage on Sunday.

John Adams, who once wished that he had been a shoemaker instead of a President, had contributed his part toward torpedoing the Federalists. He had fired two Cabinet members who took the political advice of Hamilton. Washington himself unconsciously

had helped build Jefferson's new party by his unpopular decision to put down the whisky rebellion of western farmers against a tax that favored the Federalist-owned New England rum industry.

So it was that politics marched with Jefferson on March 4, 1801, when the long-nosed Virginian picked his way through the narrow, winding streets of the near-wilderness that was the federal city on his way to the partially completed Capitol to take his oath of office.

The President's house, an unimposing structure which had been the first built in Washington, stood starkly in an open field. Along Jefferson's way to the Capitol were only a few scattered houses and shacks. In the primitive muck of this unpretension, however, an American political party had put down its first probing roots. Never again could a President successfully stand above the political fray.

Paradoxically, Jefferson and his followers were committed to domination of the government by Congress. Fearing royalty, they did not believe in a strong executive. However, the adroit Virginian solved this problem quickly. Working expertly with the rustic and inexperienced members of both Houses, he gained control of the party caucuses. As President he even presided in person over some of these meetings and dictated the chairmanships of important committees.

With these methods the President was able to impose the executive will upon the lawmakers. But it was wearying and unexciting, compared to the battles with Hamilton which had led to Jefferson's resignation from Washington's Cabinet. After six years in office Jefferson complained that the presidency had brought him "nothing but increasing drudgery and daily loss of friends."

Jefferson was happy when he was able to turn the office over to Madison, an apple-cheeked little man immaculately clothed in black and wearing a heavily powdered wig. But when Jefferson mounted his pedigree sorrel five days after the inaugural to ride out of Washington in a snowstorm, he left behind the legacy of a compact congressional juggernaut his successor was ill equipped to combat.

The brash young "War Hawks," led by Henry Clay of Kentucky

and John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, had arrived. Calhoun, a matinee idol with dark curly hair, long sideburns, and piercing eyes, talked persuasively to his colleagues. Clay, a handsome, straight-nosed young man, chomped on striped peppermint sticks while he listened to the congressional debate that finally drove Madison, against his will, into the War of 1812.

With Madison, the presidency began a coast down the slope of power until tough old Andrew Jackson picked the office up by its bootstraps and restored executive authority to the high plane it must occupy if there is to be national progress and not the stagnation of inconclusive rule by a frustrated legislature.

The plain people felt they had come into their own with the arrival of "Old Hickory." The "Virginia dynasty" was ended and the reign of the highborn was broken. The people regarded Jackson as one of their own and 10,000 of them turned out to mill about noisily while tall, gaunt Old Andy stood ramrod straight to repeat the oath of office, his face seamed with the pain of illness but his magnificent head held high.

When the ceremonies were over they followed Jackson back to the President's house. There they had a people's celebration. They drank punch from pails, planted their muddy boots on the furniture, broke dishes, and playfully jumped from the windows. Jackson, who couldn't make himself heard in the rowdy din, finally left in disgust and went to his hotel.

This exuberance was only the outward manifestation of the kind of popular strength Jackson had assembled behind him in taking the decaying Democratic-Republican party and vitalizing it as the symbol of Democratic appeal to the masses.

Suffering from tuberculosis, chronic indigestion, and diarrhea, Jackson nevertheless was a dynamo in action. Impulsive, vindictive, prejudiced, and intolerant as he was, he manufactured an electric charm of personality that drew men to him. When he sat at ease before the White House fireplace, smoking a corncob pipe and conferring with his "kitchen cabinet," the atmosphere cracked with ideas.

That Jackson should clash with Congress was inevitable. Among other reforms in the social revolution he was beginning, he pro-

posed legislation to guarantee the secret ballot, freedom of religious faith, and the right of workers to organize in unions.

Jackson's greatest battle, in which he broke the power of Congress over the government, was that in which he scuttled the Bank of the United States. Nicholas Biddle, president of this private organization with broad authority over the monetary system, forced through Congress in 1832 a bill to recharter the bank. Jackson met the legislation head on with a stinging veto indicting the rich and powerful he said "too often bend the acts of government to their selfish purposes."

Bitterly, but perhaps more perceptively than he knew, Clay wrote at this point: "We are in the midst of a revolution, hitherto bloodless, but rapidly leading toward total change of the pure Republican character of the government and to the concentration of power in the hands of one man. The powers of Congress are paralyzed except when exerted in conformity with his will." Strangely enough, this kind of complaint was to be sounded against the "new" Eisenhower when his string of vetoes forced the Democratic-dominated 86th Congress back on its spending heels in 1959.

Daniel Webster's acid comment was: "The President carries on the Government; all the rest are subcontractors. . . ." How familiarly these same charges were to ring out again a hundred years later when Franklin Roosevelt sat in the White House!

Jackson's opponents did not give up easily. Webster, Clay, and Calhoun marshaled their forces in the Senate to pass a resolution of censure against the President for his removal of deposits from the bank. The trio maneuvered the rejection of Jackson's nomination of Roger B. Taney as Secretary of the Treasury.

But Jackson was confident the people were behind the President and he brought the full power of his office into play to force Congress to its knees. Within three years the censure resolution had been expunged; the Senate confirmed the nomination of Taney to be Chief Justice; and the United States bank went out of existence.

When it finally escaped from the domination of Jackson, Congress found succeeding Presidents more pliable, less daring, and less able to interpret the voice of the people in a nation that was

heading toward the hour of dismemberment. There were brief interludes of the reassertion of presidential authority, such as that under the redoubtable but unloved James K. Polk. But most Presidents sought sedatives to offset the economic battle over slavery. And most were rather willing to permit the cup to pass from their lips.

In an era lacking a strong man in the presidency, it was natural that Congress should reassert its powers. It was in the legislative halls that the temporary compromises were being made that were holding together the skein of union.

When tall, elderly James Buchanan arrived untouched by the slavery controversy because of his diplomatic residence abroad, there was much hope that this man of wide political experience would be able to guide the nation away from the chasm.

But Buchanan's concept of the presidency was that of an official who operated in a vacuum of opinion, whose duty it was to administer but not to lead. It is true he offered verbal resistance to a Congress that badgered him at every turn with wide-ranging investigative activities. He said the House, where his severest critics operated, had "no power, no jurisdiction, no supremacy over the President."

Buchanan used some flowery phrases to describe the President as "the only direct representative on earth of the people of all and each of the sovereign states." He added:

"To them, and to them alone, is he responsible whilst acting within the sphere of his constitutional duty. . . ."

But Buchanan's sphere was small. The power of the presidency declined almost to the vanishing point while the growing giant of a nation drew ever nearer a civil war that might tear it apart. When his enemies laid down a hot fire against him, Buchanan retreated. He complained to James Gordon Bennett of the New York *World* that "if this dragooning can exist, the presidential office will be unworthy of the acceptance of a gentleman."

Buchanan found some solace in the candlelight, good wine, and conversation of the fashionable Washington dinners he liked to attend. He was, perhaps, too much a gentleman for the rowdy

times in which he served. Happily he was to be succeeded by a tall, ungainly countryman, whose niceties were those of the conference table rather than the dinner table—a President who would govern by the means at his disposal, constitutional or not.

### 3 Of Strength and Weakness



There was nothing that spoke of strength and only a little that whispered of resolution in the tall, spare figure of the man who stood a little stooped on the crude wooden stands jutting circularly out from the east steps into the Capitol plaza.

With the skeleton of the unfinished Capitol dome rising behind him, a new and untried President was reading his first inaugural address in a voice all but inaudible except to the few who pressed closest to the stands under the watchful eyes of the hard-hatted policemen who stood on guard below him.

Abraham Lincoln, a minority President, had come to save the Union. As the small-town Illinois lawyer stood with the spangled banner waving high above at his right, his purpose was single. He held, simply, that the Union "cannot separate." But his message was clothed in the soft velvet of conciliation as he said to the southern hotheads who would not listen, "We are not enemies, but friends."

The elegant gentlemen in the tall silk hats and morning coats and the ladies in the fashionable striped India silk of the day exchanged pleasantries out of earshot as the gawky countryman droned on with an address in which they couldn't have been less interested.

As the noisy crowd milled and eddied before him, Lincoln kept doggedly on with his plea for peace and understanding. There was none of the great emancipator-to-be when he intoned almost apologetically:

"I have no purpose directly or indirectly to interfere with the institution of slavery in the states where it exists."

If the myth of Lincoln, the far-seeing humanitarian, is blurred by the unvarnished circumstances of that beginning, the plain man who stood there that day, nevertheless, was to push out the walls of the presidency as he himself grew in stature and confi-

dence. And, in fact, Lincoln grew more in the office than any other man who ever occupied it.

The often melancholy lawyer from Springfield, who made a joke of everything to hide his shy aversion to many of the contacts into which he was forced, had come cautiously into an arena charged with the sparkling flints of war. As Franklin Roosevelt did nearly seventy years later, Lincoln steadfastly refused before his hour to commit himself on the overriding issue of the day. In Lincoln's case it was slavery and the economic war which grew out of it. In Roosevelt's it was economic disaster he characterized as worse than war.

Lincoln and Roosevelt, so unlike in origin, attitude, and demeanor, were to do more toward revolutionizing the presidency than any of the fifteen chief executives who preceded Lincoln or the fifteen who followed him before Roosevelt's time. There would be many who made contributions, but Lincoln, the rail splitter and jokester, and Roosevelt, the patrician and suave politician, would stand out as the strongest among the Presidents. It remained for Lincoln, however, to mark the path.

Disregarding the legal limitations on his authority, Lincoln would do what he felt must be done to save the Union. With the same broad construction of his powers, Roosevelt would help turn America's face away from despair and would direct the nation's successful struggle through the greatest war the world had known up to his time.

To a contemporary voter interested in casting his ballot for a strong, resolute man in the presidency, neither Lincoln nor Roosevelt had prepared the nation with even a fleeting glimpse of the steel armor each cloaked beneath his political garments. Each appeared to the voter of his day as a cautious man, acclimated by political experience to sense and follow public opinion rather than to lead it.

Lincoln was regarded at the time as so ill fitted for his job there was general expectation that William H. Seward, whom the President had named as his Secretary of State, would run the government.

Seward, a cigar-waving, sloppily dressed little man who had

vast—and often odorous—political experience, shared this misapprehension about the new President. About a month after the inaugural, Seward prepared and handed to Lincoln a paper, "Thoughts for the President's Consideration." In it Seward contended that something needed to be done quickly about the secession movement and he was the man to do it. One of Seward's ideas, incidentally, was to start a foreign war and thus unite the nation!

While Seward chewed his cigar in silence, Lincoln, seated at his desk, glanced through the paper. Before the President was a neat row of trays, labeled "Secretary of State," "Secretary of War," and on down the line until the last one, which was marked "Unimportant." When he had finished reading, Lincoln tossed the Seward paper in the last tray. Then he proceeded to explain to Seward that he, Lincoln, would be President for better or for worse.

Lincoln had surveyed the situation and a spectacular show of executive authority soon was forthcoming. It began with his decision to send a relief expedition to Fort Sumter just at the point when Confederate commissioners thought they had Seward's assurances the fort soon would be evacuated.

That this decision of Lincoln's forced the South into the role of aggressor was no mere coincidence. Lincoln knew instinctively that the divided public opinion in the North would unite against an aggressive act. Where one man might argue to let the South go and another might believe in the use of force to prevent a split in the nation, they would unite in defense if attacked.

The guns that boomed against Sumter found Lincoln hemmed in by the Constitution. Buchanan had been unable to find anything in the basic law justifying the use of force against the seceding states. But Lincoln felt the Constitution was designed for Union. He reasoned that the Constitution would be of little avail if there was no Union to sustain it.

A "constitutional" President might have called Congress into session to ask for emergency powers. But Lincoln had before him the failure of lame-duck congressional committees in their attempts to compromise the slavery issue; and in the new Congress

that had been elected, Lincoln's Republican party was in the minority.

And so the President acted on his own. By proclamation, Lincoln increased the size of the army and navy and called for three-year volunteers. This he did with disregard for the Constitution's delegation of authority to Congress "to raise and support armies."

This was only the beginning. Lincoln ignored the constitutional provision giving Congress the power of the purse by directing the Secretary of the Treasury to advance two million dollars to private citizens to pay for certain military and naval supplies.

Ordering a blockade of the South, he suspended the right of habeas corpus in some areas. Thousands of persons were thrown in jail where they stayed for months without even being informed of the charges against them. Lincoln's men descended on many newspapers, raiding their offices and halting the publication of some in defiance of the First Amendment guaranteeing freedom of the press.

At Lincoln's direction military authorities seized members of the Maryland legislature suspected of disloyalty and kept them imprisoned to thwart a possible secession vote. Despite the ruling of Chief Justice Taney that they were held illegally, they were not released.

If all of this sounds today like Hitler's Germany, perhaps it was, in some respects. If it was not right, nor even all of it necessary, it demonstrated that a President may go to almost any lengths to attain an end the country finds justifiable.

Perhaps the Constitution will stand in the way of a future President if the holocaust of nuclear disaster strikes. If he brushes it aside to pick up the pieces of humanity, he will, at least, have before him the example of the man who stood on the edge of an abyss and acted as best he knew how.

The awakened Seward's defense of Lincoln's actions was blunt and to the point.

"We elect a king for four years and give him absolute powers within certain limits, which, after all, he can interpret for himself," the Secretary of State said. Seward was wrong on many things but he knew a determined President when he saw one.

Lincoln's own explanation of the actions in which he had pushed out the boundaries of the presidency and had trodden upon untried ground was earthy and simple.

"As Commander-in-Chief in time of war," he said, "I suppose I have a right to take any measure which may best subdue the enemy."

Lincoln's course differed from that of the foreign dictators in several respects, one of which was vital to the preservation of a democracy. He knew he must have the support of public opinion.

When an emissary of influential northern leaders, including several governors, came to him to urge a more vigorous policy of pursuing the war, Lincoln listened gravely and agreed that the opinions expressed carried great weight. But he added:

"Still, in justice to myself, you must remember that Abraham Lincoln is President of the United States. Anything that the President of the United States does, right or wrong, will be the acts of Abraham Lincoln, and Abraham Lincoln will by the people be held responsible for the President's actions."

While he failed to consult the representatives of the people in Congress at the beginning, Lincoln knew he must have them behind him in the end. But this could wait; he had no intention of permitting the Union to disintegrate while Congress talked.

When he finally called Congress into special session on July 4, 1861, Lincoln asked for ratification of all of his actions up to that time on the grounds of his stated belief that "nothing has been done beyond the constitutional competence of Congress." The legislators obligingly approved of his course.

While Lincoln stood out as the strong, decisive President the Union needed in its hour of travail, it must not be assumed that he always had his way nor that there were no limitations on what could be accomplished by the presidency.

There was the case, for instance, of General George B. McClellan and Lincoln's war order No. 1. The order, setting February 22, 1862, as the date for the launching of an offensive, was ignored by cocky "Little Mac," a fuss-budget whose ability to organize an army far exceeded his inclination to throw it into battle. Lincoln fumed but he found that while a President could change gen-

erals, he could not effectively direct military tactics. Under similar war circumstances, Roosevelt made over-all strategy decisions in consultation with his military advisers and with Winston Churchill, but left tactical matters to those in uniform.

The Congress, which had obediently ratified Lincoln's early war actions, soon began to reach out to reclaim some of the powers it had surrendered to the President. Some of the little men who sat in the seats of power in Congress regarded Lincoln as a misfit. They, and not this blundering backwoodsman, would run the war.

So they set out in December 1861 to assert their authority by the appointment of a Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War, with three senators and four representatives as members. Controlled by the Radical Republicans—who were radical only in the sense that they proposed to subjugate the white South—the committee took over partial control of military operations, undermined service discipline, and struck at the power of the President.

Emboldened by their advances in this field, the Radicals put through a congressional party caucus late in 1862 a resolution for a change in the Cabinet. It was directed primarily at Seward, who enjoyed Lincoln's earthy storytelling and by this time had become one of the President's closest companions. Lincoln's quick-witted disposal of some of the Radicals' complaints also may have influenced them to push the resolution.

One day Senator Benjamin Wade of Ohio, a leader of the Radical group, had stormed into the White House to see Lincoln and to complain about the state of political affairs.

"Mr. President," Wade thundered, "this Administration, sir, is on the way to hell—on the way to hell, sir, it's only a mile away from it!"

With an amused smile Lincoln replied:

"Why, Wade, that's the exact distance from here to the Capitol."

Lincoln had yielded to demands of the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War that Simon Cameron, a Pennsylvania machine politician, be ousted as Secretary of War. Cameron's conduct had been such that the President could not defend his

Cabinet officer and Lincoln replaced him with Edwin M. Stanton, another Pennsylvanian who had once called the President "the baboon in the White House" and who continued to maintain his antagonism toward Lincoln.

The President, however, was of no mind to permit the Radicals to drive Seward out of the Cabinet and thus trespass further on the field of executive authority. He knew very well that his pompous and scheming Secretary of the Treasury, Salmon P. Chase, was behind the move to get rid of Seward.

Displaying his political acumen, Lincoln brought together the congressional caucus committee with the full Cabinet and let the embarrassed principals squirm. Seward had submitted his resignation and, as a result of the conference, Chase felt he too must resign. Lincoln rejected both resignations and sent the legislators back to Capitol Hill empty-handed.

Despite such challenges, Lincoln continued to assert his executive power. After the Union victory at Antietam, the President stole the political thunder of the Radicals by issuing on January 1, 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation, freeing all slaves in states still supporting the rebellion.

It was a day in which Lincoln had observed the traditional democratic custom of standing for hours in the White House to shake the hands of all those who chose to queue up and wait their turn. When it came time for him to sign the proclamation, the tired President told Seward he was afraid his aching right hand would tremble and this might be misinterpreted in history.

"If my hand trembles when I sign the proclamation, all who examine the document hereafter will say, 'he hesitated,'" Lincoln said. Then he proceeded to inscribe "Abraham Lincoln" in a firm hand and was satisfied with his penmanship.

Later the President issued a Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction that caused the Radicals to erupt again. They came up with the Wade-Davis bill aimed at making Reconstruction extremely difficult and proposing to make Congress supreme in this field. Lincoln treated it to a pocket veto and immediately was assailed in the Wade-Davis manifesto which told the President to "obey and execute, not make the laws."

But Sherman had marched into Atlanta before the November 1864 election and all of the manifestos of Congress were washed down the drain before the manifest power of a President who had the people behind him.

The assassin's bullet which stilled Lincoln gave the rampaging Radical Republicans, who could not cope with him, their opportunity to write their black, vindictive pages in history. From the highest pinnacle of power it had ever attained, the presidency was reduced to almost complete ineffectiveness.

Lincoln had determined that those who sought to destroy the Union should be treated with magnanimity, and Andrew Johnson—the swarthy, sturdy Tennessee Democrat who had been elected with him on the Union ticket—chose in the end to follow Lincoln's course.

Men come to the presidency in a variety of ways. Some are war heroes like Washington, Grant, and Eisenhower. Others, like Jefferson and Wilson, reflect the surge of their times toward new horizons. Some like Buchanan and Harding are politicians chosen almost solely for their availability. And seven have been accidents, men who were not selected originally because of their possible presidential qualifications, but whose names were written in second place on the ticket for geographical reasons or because of their supposed appeal to a powerful minority.

As one of these, Johnson stood out as the only southern senator who remained loyal to the Union. He had come into the Republican party in 1861 along with a host of other Democrats who supported the war. Lincoln had kept an eye on this former tailor and wife-educated man who might appeal to the war Democrats and thus supply the support the President felt was needed if he were to be re-elected.

Negotiating personally with the political bosses, Lincoln lined up the needed votes to swing the Union party vice-presidential nomination to Johnson. Even querulous Thad Stevens—the congressman from Pennsylvania—who was to make Johnson's life as President a nightmare, went along despite a grumbling: "Can't you get a candidate for vice president without going down into a damned rebel province for one?"

As Harry Truman said more than ninety years later, Johnson "inherited the thankless job of rebuilding the Union after the war." Even the popular and politically adroit Lincoln might have been hard pressed to stem the tide of vindictiveness that was running through the people of the North and was reflected to an amplified degree in their representatives in Congress. Johnson was courageous but politically inept and the people were not behind him. His was an impossible task.

As a member of the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War before he had become military governor of Tennessee, Johnson's ascension to the presidency was welcomed by the Republican Radicals. They were happily rid of the bothersome Lincoln and now they had one of their own kind in the White House.

But while Johnson hated secession, he was not ready to deliver the ballot to the poor, ignorant Negroes nor to make the South a conquered province. With minor changes, Johnson adopted Lincoln's plan for Reconstruction, and the war with Congress was on. Led by the clubfooted Stevens, who controlled the House, the Radicals set out to get Johnson's scalp.

It was an era of intense passion. Four years of a bloody war had spread a hate psychosis across the land. Though his convictions and sense of justice may have been as strong as Lincoln's, Johnson lacked the political finesse by which his predecessor might have been able to avoid some of the pitfalls the courageous, but dogmatic new President encountered.

The battle began as soon as Congress convened in December 1865. The vengeful Stevens pushed through a resolution creating a Joint Committee on Reconstruction, with the avowed purpose of taking the decisions on Reconstruction out of the President's hands.

But Johnson fought. He vetoed the Radical-supported bill to continue the noxious Freedmen's Bureau, which had been perverted from its original purpose of supervising the freed Negroes and whose agents were labeled by General U. S. Grant after an inspection tour as "a useless and dangerous set." Johnson won only a temporary victory, however, for when a slightly revised bill had been passed and he vetoed it, Congress overrode the veto.

In the beginning Johnson had had the good will of the country. He lost it by two serious political blunders in 1866. With the congressional elections approaching, the President tried his hand at organizing the nation's moderates in a new party at a National Union convention in Philadelphia. He succeeded only in convincing many from the North that his primary backing came from former rebels and Copperheads. Then Johnson took a "swing around the circle," speaking in a dozen cities from New York to St. Louis and back to Washington.

A product of southern "poor whites," Johnson was sensitive and proud and the possessor of a strong class consciousness. His temper had a low boiling point and when he was heckled, as he was on the speaking tour, he had none of Lincoln's subtle ability to turn such attacks back on their originators. As a result, Johnson flew off into name-calling tirades that cost him much sympathy and support.

Without the backing of any sizable portion of the people, Johnson was reduced to a single weapon, the veto. But even this was ineffective as the Radicals gained two-thirds control of the membership of both Houses—enough to override any presidential veto—and thus took over command of the government.

Over presidential vetoes the Radicals established military rule in the South. They pushed through the Tenure of Office Act under which Cabinet members were to hold their jobs during the era of the President who appointed them and for one month after. The appointees could be removed only with the consent of the Senate, a reversal of the tradition that had held since 1789.

With the bit in their teeth, the Radicals enacted legislation to prevent the President from appointing new Supreme Court justices and, for all practical purposes, deprived him of command of the army. They also took away his pocket-veto privilege—that by which a President may refuse to act on a bill and thus consign it to death ten days after any session of Congress ends—by passing an act under which Congress remained in continuous session, without any presidential call.

This was Congress asserting to the hilt the authority to run the government, an authority that most of the Founding Fathers had

expected would remain in the hands of the legislature. It was a congressional government built into a tower of hate the like of which the country had not seen before and happily not since.

But the Radicals overreached themselves, as men tipsy with power nearly always do. When they tried to oust Johnson by impeachment, their power was great, but it was one vote short in the Senate and Johnson remained in the White House as an embattled but unbowed President.

But Congress had flexed its muscles and in the age of financial pirates and continental plunderers which followed, it continued its domination of a presidency poorly filled by Grant and some of his successors. In that era, as George Frisbie Hoar said, if the legislators visited the White House "it was to give, not receive, advice."

Presidents Rutherford B. Hayes, James A. Garfield, Chester A. Arthur, and Grover Cleveland were able to stem the tide of parliamentary government somewhat by successful resistance to senatorial efforts to dictate their appointments. But the presidency was in the doldrums. The railroads, the insurance companies, the steel and oil barons, and the bankers bought their Senate and House members and through them ran the government.

It remained for Theodore Roosevelt, "that damned cowboy," as Mark Hanna called him, to reassert the full power of the chief executive in behalf of the people.

The assassination of William McKinley plummeted into the presidency a man who was at first awed by its responsibilities, despite the long training he had had in public service, including the governorship of New York. Hanna, in the Senate, was big business's ambassador to the government. Hanna handled the patronage and dictated which bills would be passed in Congress. He was used to having a President co-operate with him.

Hanna, a practical politician, had known all along that Roosevelt would not be a co-operator. As chairman of the Republican National Committee he had done everything possible to prevent Roosevelt's nomination for the vice-presidency. But Hanna had been caught in a squeeze play between Senator Thomas C. Platt's desire to get rid of Roosevelt as governor of New York and the

desire of Senator Matthew S. Quay for revenge for Hanna's sponsorship of a resolution which denied Quay the Senate seat from Pennsylvania to which he had been appointed. With New York and Pennsylvania supporting Roosevelt for second place on the ticket, delegations from the West had a chance to show their enthusiasm for the Rough Rider and he was nominated.

It is difficult to envision Theodore Roosevelt, the individualist with the flashing teeth, the bristling mustache, the pugnacious chin, and the physical make-up which exuded vitality from every pore, kowtowing to the wishes of Hanna. But in the first few months of his White House tenure, T.R. was tractable, very much a party man, and little inclined to kick up a fuss.

McKinley had shut Roosevelt out of the Republican administration's councils. It was during this time that the frustrated Roosevelt felt that "the vice presidency is an utterly anomalous office (one which I think ought to be abolished)." This was merely, of course, the complaint of a man whose inner compulsion to shine publicly had been repressed.

Despite the brave words he mustered for reporters on his first day in the White House, Roosevelt moved cautiously into a position of power that was to restore the presidency to the eminence it must have if the nation is to progress.

Roosevelt told the reporters he felt himself just as much a constitutionally elected President as McKinley had been.

"I was voted for as vice president, it is true," he said, "but the Constitution provides that in the case of the death or inability of the President, the Vice President shall serve as President and, therefore, due to the act of a madman, I am President and shall act in every word and deed precisely as if I and not McKinley had been the candidate for whom the electors cast the vote for President."

Naturally, the honeymoon with Hanna and the conservative Republicans could not last long. This slapdash young man with an adolescent's vigor and pep could not sit still and play a mouse's game. Roosevelt didn't want advice from Hanna or anybody else; he wanted only approval. He had to be doing things and doing them with a fanfare.

The break came in February 1902 when Roosevelt directed the Attorney General to move in court toward the dissolution of the Northern Securities Company, a railroad consolidation. When the Supreme Court upheld the government's contention that the Northern Securities merger had violated the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, the era of "trust busting" was under way.

As he himself said later, Roosevelt did not enter the presidency "with any deliberately planned and far-reaching scheme of social betterment." As a matter of fact, he had voted consistently anti-labor in the New York Legislature and had once denounced as socialistic a twelve-hour limitation on the workday of streetcar motormen.

And yet the course of events was to carry this President into a close relationship with Samuel Gompers of the American Federation of Labor, and the *New York Sun* was to say editorially that Roosevelt had placed labor unions "above the law and above the Constitution, because for him they are the American people."

Just as had Andy Jackson and Lincoln, Roosevelt was prepared to use almost any means at his command, constitutional or otherwise, to achieve results he believed were best for the people. As he wrote later: "I declined to adopt the view that what was imperatively necessary for the nation could not be done by the President unless he could find some specific authorization to do it. . . ."

Roosevelt amazed the country by intervening in the coal strike of 1902. He shocked the conservatives by threatening to operate the mines with troops, but he forced the mine operators to arbitrate and the people got coal while the miners got an increase in their average pay of ten dollars a week.

As a man who was wielding a broad sword, Roosevelt recognized in Congress an adversary that at times could be coaxed and wheedled, but which he felt, on the whole, was dominated by men who "distrusted anything that was progressive and dreaded radicalism."

"These men," he said, "still from force of habit applauded what Lincoln had done in the way of curbing radical abuses of his day; but they did not apply the spirit in which Lincoln worked to the abuses of their day."

Nevertheless, Roosevelt was well enough versed in politics to know that the carrot precedes the whip. Accordingly, he developed a close relationship with Speaker of the House Joseph G. Cannon. Uncle Joe was temporarily delighted with the arrangement, recording that "we did not always agree; in fact we more often disagreed, but seldom in principle and usually as to practical methods."

Cannon was a valuable ally, but withal one who exacted his price. Roosevelt was always willing to trade a less-pressing objective for a major one. To get House passage of the Elkins Act to curb railroad rate evils, for instance, he had to give up his idea for liberalization of the tariffs. The *New York World* observed in this instance that Congress had "evidenced almost phonographic fidelity to the wishes of the President."

Roosevelt, who believed in using "every ounce of power" he could find in the presidency, also busied himself with foreign affairs.

When Colombia rejected the Hay-Herran Convention for the construction of the Panama Canal, T.R. reacted characteristically. On November 2, 1903, he ordered American warships to Panama to maintain free transit across the isthmus. The next day native groups and promoters connected with the Panama Canal Company obligingly produced a revolt in the state of Panama.

Three days later Roosevelt recognized the new government, and thus was "the Rape of Panama" accomplished, to the delight of the American public which had been waiting twenty-five years for action.

Though it is not recorded that he ever spoke especially softly, Roosevelt was ready at all times to use his famous "big stick." He demonstrated this in his Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine in which he said that if there was "wrongdoing or impotence"—note the word "impotence"—in the Western Hemisphere it might force the United States "to the exercise of international police power." In other words, this brandisher of the "big stick" said to the weaker governments of the Western Hemisphere: "Be effective in my way, which is the right way, or watch out for me!"

Despite the bellicose gestures, Roosevelt was a man of peace

as well as of war. When he served as mediator for the settlement of the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, the President was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. He loved peace, one might say, well enough to fight for it, if that ever became necessary.

The irrepressible Roosevelt fought with everybody who did not conform to his line of thinking. He had some of the stuff of which dictators are made, except that his times and his background did not invite what to him might have been the romantic lark of a splendid ride on a white horse. But he made up for it with his disdain of "mollycoddles," "muckrakers," "nature fakers," and those who practiced the "wilful sterility" of birth control.

To him, General Nelson A. Miles, head of the army, was not only a "brave peacock" but at times "a scoundrelly hypocrite." He picked the brains of Robert M. LaFollette for progressive ideas and held LaFollette personally in contempt. He put the anti-trust law aside to permit the United States Steel Corporation to acquire the Tennessee Coal & Iron Company while he was still inveighing against the "malefactors of great wealth." He was, let us say charitably, never boringly consistent.

When Congress declined to vote sufficient funds, Roosevelt sent the all-white fleet off on a world cruise with only enough coal to take the ships to Europe. He could run a bluff and he knew Congress would come through with the necessary money to send the fleet around the globe, as it did. More than anything else in a century, this gesture demonstrated that the United States had come of age as a world power; it could fight anywhere.

This man who was President and who gloried in the fact, after the election in 1904, that he was no longer his "accidental excellency" was unpredictable, erratic, egotistical, and often misinformed. But there was never a dull moment with T.R. and the people loved him.

Through his variegated façade there was visible a shining, never flickering light that burned always through the controversy that surrounded his presidency. He expressed it best when he wrote:

"Americanism means the virtues of courage, honor, justice, truth, sincerity and hardihood—the virtues that made America.

The things that will destroy America are prosperity-at-any-price, peace-at-any-price, safety-first instead of duty-first, the love of soft living and the get-rich-quick theory of life."

To the generations of the softer, easier living latter half of the century Roosevelt had left a philosophical heritage that needed to be resurrected by a nation challenged by the lean and hungry legions of the world's have-nots.

Before Roosevelt the presidency had been pretty tepid stuff for a long time and the people rewarded T.R.'s zest for his job with joyous support of a man who did things differently and always kept them interested. The people gave him the largest popular majority any successful presidential candidate had received up to his time in 1904, when he defeated Judge Alton B. Parker, the Democratic nominee.

So March 4, 1905, was a glorious day for the man who had feared that he would never be elected in his own right, with his name at the head of the ticket. The sun shone brightly, casting a shadow of the dome on the south side of the Senate wing of the Capitol as Roosevelt advanced to the podium to take the oath. Resplendent in a double-breasted frock coat, buttoned tightly almost to his chin, Roosevelt made an imposing figure on the dais of the furred and garlanded stands as he talked in his Gatling-gun voice of the future of the country. On that day he was exuberant America, come to life.

But impulsive, swashbuckling men inevitably make mistakes and Roosevelt had made his most grievous one in announcing that he would not be a candidate for another term. As much as anything else this cost him the support he had been able to maintain in Congress. It left behind him, when his elective term was through, the glowing embers of controversy that were to destroy the effectiveness of William Howard Taft's administration and to bring Roosevelt back into a futile contest for the presidency when he had had time to forget his own sage observation that "I have never known a hurrah to endure for five years."

Although he had professed belief that Secretary of State Elihu Root was the best man in his Cabinet because "he is the only one

who will fight with me," Roosevelt eventually had chosen Taft as his successor.

Taft, a tall, heavily rounded man with a beaming smile and a contagious chuckle which shook his over-ample stomach, had no real liking for politics. In fact he confessed at one point "politics makes me sick."

Roosevelt had offered his friend the chief justiceship and Taft really wanted it but had been forced by circumstances at the time to urge that any such appointment be deferred.

The story was told of a White House dinner in January 1908, when Roosevelt was weighing his final decision about a successor. The President told those seated at the dinner table he was clairvoyant and could see a man standing before him who weighed about 350 pounds and over whose head something was hanging.

"I cannot make out what it is," Roosevelt said. "It is hanging by a slender thread. At one time it looks like the presidency—then again it looks like the chief justiceship."

Taft broke in with, "Make it the chief justiceship."

"No," interposed Mrs. Taft, "make it the presidency."

There is no record that Roosevelt took Mrs. Taft's views into consideration, but when March 4, 1909, rolled around it was the jolly Taft, bundled up in a great black coat with a velvet collar, who sat beside the outgoing President as the inaugural procession made its way through the deep snow and against the howling winds from the White House to the Capitol.

Taft tipped his high silk hat to the benumbed but applauding spectators as the carriage's two Negro coachmen, teeth chattering, pulled a rubber poncho closer about them and wished fervently for the warmth of their Capitol destination.

The inauspicious day, which forced Taft to take his oath indoors, marked a change in the presidency more radical than appeared on the surface. To T.R. the White House had been a "bully pulpit" from which to direct the social awakening of America by every means at hand. To the judicial-minded Taft, ill equipped as an executive, it was a house of torture where a never ending flow of problems pressed upon him. This was something that Roosevelt had failed to perceive. It was incomprehensible to him that

the man he had chosen could fail to pick up the flaming arrow of progressivism, fit it to his bow, and loft it in a fiery arc into the ranks of the Philistines of reaction. Taft had been indoctrinated. All was well. The great man might go off to hunt lions, secure in the knowledge the work he had started would be carried on.

But it was not so. The mountainous, biliary Taft entertained no concept of the presidency comparable to Roosevelt's. Where T.R. had been irked by any containment of the broad sweep of executive authority, Taft felt that the President "can exercise no power which cannot be reasonably and fairly traced to some specific grant of power or justly implied or included within such express grant as necessary and proper to its exercise."

"Such specific grant must be either in the Constitution or in an act of Congress passed in pursuance thereof," he continued. "There is no undefined residuum of power which he can exercise because it seems to him to be in the public interest."

This was scarcely the kind of definition of presidential authority Roosevelt expected or that many of Taft's successors would accept passively. It probably was just as well, as it turned out, that Roosevelt was engaged with Africa's outstanding lions; else the thunderous disagreement between these two strangely contrasting friends might have rocketed into the skies before Taft had his chance—and flunked it—with Congress.

It was inevitable that Taft would encounter rough going with the hardened core of expert politicians who ran the Senate under the general direction of Senator Nelson W. Aldrich. Aldrich, a quiet, even-tempered operator and close friend of both J. P. Morgan and John D. Rockefeller, had little less than contempt for the common people, believing they didn't know what they wanted most of the time.

In the House, Speaker Cannon's power was crumbling and soon would be assailed successfully by an obstreperous young fellow from Nebraska, Representative George Norris. To complicate matters, Taft detested Cannon and any real co-operation between the two men was out of the question.

Taft had no leadership in Congress loyal to him. As Senator

Jonathan P. Dolliver of Iowa put it, the President (who weighed 332 pounds at the time) was "a large, good-natured body, entirely surrounded by men who know exactly what they want."

Taft had been directed by the Republican party platform to call a special session of Congress for a downward tariff revision. The House of Representatives passed the Payne bill with some reductions. In the Senate, Aldrich knew what he wanted and, as chairman of the Finance Committee, he brought out a bill boosting rates. Republican insurgents advertised its inequities but the measure passed; Taft signed it and later praised it as the best the Republican party ever had produced.

The tariff performance went a long way toward alienating Roosevelt. The former President really was infuriated, however, by an allegation in a government suit attacking U. S. Steel's purchase of Tennessee Coal & Iron that big steel had hoodwinked T.R. to get his approval of that deal.

When Taft fired Roosevelt's friend, Gifford Pinchot, as chief of the Forest Service, the man in the White House and the man who put him there came to the parting of the ways. Roosevelt had his excuse to run again in 1912, a circumstance we shall examine more closely in a subsequent chapter. The upshot of it all, of course, was to bring to the White House another minority President who matched, in a more modern way, some of Lincoln's broad application of executive power.

So it was that on the blustery day of March 4, 1913, Taft squeezed his big bulk in beside Woodrow Wilson for the ride in a horse-drawn carriage to the Capitol to deliver the presidency to a Democrat.

A colorful parade, led by the Essex cavalry troop and peopled with thousands of deserving Democrats, snaked its way down Pennsylvania Avenue for nine hours to honor a man of peace who would lead the country into a war that would all but remold its foundations.

## 4      The Peaks and the Valleys



A cordon of armed soldiers stretched around the United States Capitol, its dome glimmering faintly in the night rain. Mounted and dismounted troops of the Second Cavalry, their carbines unslung, stood motionless or rode on the alert, their spurs jingling, around the entrances.

Within the historic sandstone walls police and hastily summoned post-office inspectors earlier had helped disperse a vociferous, demonstrating group of pacifists who had invaded Vice-President Marshall's office and then had stormed their way into the quarters of Speaker of the House Champ Clark.

A day of strife had preceded this eventful night of April 2, 1917. In one of the halls near the entrance to the Senate chamber, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, slight and sixty-six, had become involved in fisticuffs and, incredibly, had knocked down an obstreperous pacifist who had accosted him belligerently.

In an anteroom off the House of Representatives, the tall, long-jawed President of the United States stood silently before a large mirror, rearranging his tortured countenance for the ordeal that was approaching. For security reasons he had been escorted to the Capitol by a detachment of cavalry and he felt keenly the lack of unanimity of opinion behind the course he was about to pursue.

Within a matter of moments the President who had been re-elected because "he kept us out of war" and who had said there was such a thing as being "too proud to fight" marched solemnly with his escort committee into the House to ask the assembled members of Congress for a declaration of hostilities against the Central Powers.

Woodrow Wilson's dramatic call on the nation to fight won the applause of a Congress which recognized, despite its diversity of

opinion on the wisdom of the step, that the President's course had made inevitable a declaration of war.

When the President had concluded, Lodge was the first to press forward to grasp Wilson's hand and to congratulate him. This was the Lodge who was to head the Senate forces which would defeat Wilson's great dream of peace: American participation in the League of Nations. This was the Lodge who was to say a few short years later he "never expected to hate anyone in politics with the hatred I feel toward Wilson."

There was no avowed hatred of the President then but there was discord within his own house and it soon manifested itself. In the debate that crackled in the House of Representatives, Wilson's party floor leader, Representative Claude Kitchin of North Carolina, opposed the President. When the House finally voted, 373 to 50, at 3:12 A.M. on April 6 to declare war, Kitchin's was one of the "noes."

When Wilson's military-conscription program came before the House subsequently, Speaker Clark, still bitter about his defeat by Wilson for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1912, stepped down from his presiding officer's seat to the floor of the House to denounce the proposal.

On that rainy night of April 2, the decision for war or for peace had been left to Congress for probably the last time. It is true that Wilson gave the members little choice in exercising their constitutional authority to draw the sword. But if Wilson had been palpably wrong in judging the public sentiment he had helped create, Congress conceivably could have denied his request.

In the future, war would come without debate on its advisability, as it did a quarter of a century later when another President would make his way slowly and painfully to the podium of the House, snap in place the braces on his withered legs, toss his head back in a familiar gesture of confidence, and ask for a formal declaration of hostilities that already had begun with a smashing American defeat at Pearl Harbor.

In the future, war would come without even formal congressional ratification. A bouncy, determined little man in the White House would announce solemnly to congressional leaders gath-

ered there that American ground forces had been ordered into Korea. He would ask no formal approval of this action.

In the future, the intercontinental missiles with hydrogen warheads might fall suddenly. There would be no time nor need for Congress to vote. The President, to whom Congress had passed the decision, would retaliate.

This practical revision in the constitutional balance of power that enlarged the panoply of presidential authority was begun more or less unconsciously by Wilson.

The Princeton professor-politician had come to the presidency with some clear conceptions of the scope of that office's operations and its sweep of authority. He felt, as he wrote, that once the President won the admiration and confidence of the country "no other single force can withstand him, no combination of forces will easily overpower him."

In the end he was to be overpowered—but only because he had lost the country's admiration and confidence. At the outset, he was to demonstrate an ability to get things done that was surprising in the century's first egghead President. He was to climb the mountains of world leadership and to descend at last into the valley of pettiness.

When he entered the presidency, Wilson's keynote was of understanding and co-operation. He honestly believed, despite some of his experiences as governor of New Jersey, that men were always reasonable, that they would listen to logic, that they would be impelled in their deeds, as in their words, by a sense of justice.

But Wilson was acute enough to know that politicians required special treatment and he gave it to them. Out of the blue he revived a custom that had died out with John Adams, notifying Congress that he intended to appear in person to deliver his first State of the Union message.

The homely professor in his frock coat and high silk hat looked every inch the President when he arrived at the Capitol on April 13, 1913. There were maidenly sighs over this man who was in the peak of robust health and who looked so virile that he was a serious rival to the matinee idols of his day. And he was there to

charm a Congress only begrudgingly willing to come to grips with a President who did not sequester himself in the White House.

There were no television cameras peering down from the galleries and no radio broadcasts to carry his voice across the world when Wilson stepped into the center of the stage that now has become familiar in sight and sound to most of America's 175 million or more citizens.

The intellectual who broke through his introvert's shell that day enlisted many a critic in the cause of the presidency. He wrote history with a flourish when he told the assembled members of the Senate and House:

"I am very glad indeed to have this opportunity to address the two houses directly and to verify for myself the impression that the President of the United States is a person, not a mere department of the Government hailing Congress from some isolated island of jealous power, sending messages and not speaking naturally in his own voice; that he is a human being trying to co-operate with other human beings in a common service."

It had been so long since Adams that men in Congress had forgotten how a President's commanding voice sounded. They liked what they heard and they liked more the new President's willingness to meet them as equals. Here, they felt, was a man with whom they could dicker.

Wilson encouraged this feeling. Immediately after the delivery of his message he told the astounded escort committee he would like very much to walk over to the Senate and talk with members of that body's Finance Committee about the tariff situation. Silk hat in hand, Wilson walked and chatted with accompanying senators from the House side of the Capitol to the Senate wing.

With a left and a right turn at the end of what the Capitol guides say is the longest uninterrupted corridor in the world (longer than the Washington Monument is tall), Wilson and his entourage arrived at what is known as the "President's room" off the Senate chamber.

Few Presidents had been there on official business since the rain-sodden day of March 4, 1865, when Lincoln sat at the pol-

ished mahogany table to sign the bills that particular Congress was passing in the last hours of its existence.

It had been a nasty winter in Washington, with the saving grace that the Potomac had frozen over thickly and the weary residents could relieve the tension by going skating, secure in the knowledge that the war was at Richmond's gates. But there were only torrents of rain for two days before Lincoln went to the Capitol and sat, with his tall hat on his head, to sign the final bills before he put his thumbprint on history with his stirring second inaugural address.

Wilson, in whom history coursed strongly, may have felt his kinship to his great predecessor. But he was there for the more practical business of making friends and influencing people to go along with a legislative program he was about to steal almost bodily from Roosevelt's Progressive party and to get enacted into law.

Unlike some of his successors, Wilson was willing to lobby personally with the legislators. He took into his own hands the campaign to get the legislation he wanted. He could and would call upon a recalcitrant Democrat and personally solicit his support. This was the Wilson of reform and of progress. If he had not originated all the ideas, he at least was responsible for lowering tariffs, passage of the Federal Reserve law, and enactment of the Clayton, Federal Trade, Federal Farm Loan, Rural Credit, and Cotton Futures acts.

All this, however, bore little relationship to the Wilson of war and of peace. Where he had been soft, coaxing, and co-operative with Congress, Wilson reverted to his true introvert nature in international matters. Here was no pleasant exercise of charm and co-operation. Here were stark realities that might mean the nation's death. A man had to think about them; he had no time for peccadilloes, no energy left to be accommodating to the dunderheads who might block his path.

Strangely enough this greatest of the intellectuals of the twentieth-century Presidents had no master plan when Europe was enveloped in war. Like lesser men he permitted himself to be pushed and pummeled by events to which he reacted with half-formed opinions or really none at all. He was improvising, let us

say, but with few of the tonal qualities displayed later by Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Wilson began America's recognition of the war in Europe with an August 19, 1914 proclamation of neutrality in which he urged the American people to be "impartial in thought as well as action" toward the belligerents.

In February 1915, when the Germans proclaimed the waters around the British Isles a war zone, Wilson directed a stern protest to the Central Powers. But in March, when the British clamped a blockade on all merchant vessels bound to or from Germany, the State Department's note was conciliatory in tone.

On May 7, 1915, the Germans made their greatest mistake of the war. Without warning, one of their submarines sank the liner *Lusitania* off the Irish coast. There were 124 Americans among the 1198 persons who perished and the revulsion of U.S. public opinion, to which Wilson still was acutely attuned at the time, was terrific.

William Jennings Bryan, once a lean crusader who had grown fat and tired, proposed remonstrating softly with the Germans. Shoving Bryan aside, Wilson wrote a stern note demanding that the Germans abandon unrestricted submarine warfare, apologize for the sinking of the *Lusitania*, and make reparation for the American lives that had been lost—as if the latter were possible.

As is usual in such international exchanges, the Germans replied with a series of bald-faced lies that the *Lusitania* was armed and carried contraband. Wilson dashed off a furious note demanding specific pledges that the Germans would halt unrestricted submarine warfare. Poor old Bryan, whose thinking had not kept pace since he was the curly-haired young man of destiny in 1896, could not take it. He resigned and Robert Lansing, State Department counselor who was later to be fired by Wilson out of pique, became Secretary of State.

As a man who had wanted in the beginning to be neutral, Wilson was in the freshet of events and he could not turn back. By September 1915, he was acknowledging the economic aspects to the killing that was going on in Europe by approving American

bankers' loans to the belligerents, in this case almost exclusively to Britain and France.

But if he could not stem the world tide, Wilson, and Wilson alone, was at the command post on America's voyage in the dangerous seas. He handled the troubles with Mexico, Haiti, and Santo Domingo with a high and single hand. When a challenge to his international policies arose in Congress, he squelched it.

In February of 1915, Representative Jeff McLemore, a Texas Democrat, had introduced a resolution requesting the President to warn Americans not to travel on armed vessels. This was in response to a German declaration that all such vessels would be sunk without warning. When congressional leaders called at the White House about the matter, Wilson greeted them in wrath. He said he considered the McLemore resolution a challenge to his leadership as President and depicted it as a test of how far the United States would go in maintaining its sovereignty. Wilson informed the Senate Foreign Relations Committee he would not consent to "any abridgment of American rights in any respect . . ." and that was that.

Blind Senator Thomas P. Gore of Oklahoma, alternately one of the most benign and bellicose men I have ever known, then introduced a resolution to deny passports to Americans who planned to travel on armed belligerent vessels. With Gore's consent, his resolution was altered to declare that the loss of American lives as the result of the sinking of armed merchant vessels would "constitute a just and sufficient cause of war between the United States and the German Empire." Gore was to be one of the eight members who did not vote when the Senate gave its 82 to 6 approval of the declaration of war in 1917.

Gore's was one of those mousetrap plays by which some members of Congress hoped to draw the President into an untenable position and to run over him for substantial gains. But Wilson read the play before the ball was snapped. He worked quickly to assemble the defensive strength by which Gore was thrown behind the line of scrimmage for a loss on a 68 to 14 Senate vote.

Wilson, who barely had gained re-election in 1916 and then only because he was regarded as the man who was keeping the

country out of the European fighting, was gradually inching the nation into war. There were those in Congress who were determined to halt this process by any means at their command.

The "little group of wilful men," headed by Senator Robert M. LaFollette of Wisconsin, where German sympathies were strong, found such a way when the President asked Congress on February 26, 1917, for authority to arm U.S. merchant vessels to protect themselves from attack. LaFollette, six other Republicans, and five Democrats filibustered the bill until Congress was forced to adjourn on March 4. Wilson promptly ordered the vessels armed and directed the Navy Department's order authorizing them to fire on threatening submarines.

While he was responding to challenges and reacting to events, Wilson's presidential technique was only slightly less than superb. It was only when he entered the field of long-range planning for the peace, which should have been his forte, that this sometimes incomprehensible man began to falter and to blunder.

The first—and probably the worst—of these blunders was political. It was committed in the mid-term congressional election of 1918. The military campaigns had found victory peering cautiously over the shoulders of the Allied forces and there was a feeling in the air that peace could not be far away when Wilson said grandly on May 27 that "politics is adjourned," adding that "the election will go to those who think the least of it."

But the fearful Democratic politicians chipped away at this above-the-battle stand by a President who, in his day, was regarded by his party members as almost as non-partisan as Eisenhower was to be looked upon by many Republicans nearly forty years later. Wilson yielded to their entreaties and called for the election of a Democratic Congress.

This one action was tabbed by my old friend, Alben Barkley, as Wilson's greatest political mistake and I am inclined to agree. Barkley, who was then only climbing toward the pinnacle of power he reached in the party, argued at the time against cracking the façade of non-partisanship that had been maintained during the war.

Wilson was to learn, as were other outstanding chief executives

after him, that while the President may dominate a Congress or berate it for its failures to the tune of popular applause, the voters instinctively revolt against permitting him to dictate the composition of the legislative branch.

Probably the voters would have given the Republicans control of Congress even if Wilson had remained silent. Historically the opposition party almost always gains in these non-presidential-year elections.

What Wilson risked by his appeal for a Democratic Congress was not only the resurgence of Republican opposition at home but the appearance abroad that he had been repudiated by the electorate. This was not essentially true but often the appearance is of more importance than the essence.

The Wilson who went to Paris in January of 1919 for the peace negotiations stood ostensibly at the peak of world renown. As Pericles said of the Athenian heroes, he had won "a home in the minds of men." His Fourteen Points had electrified the world and peoples who hardly knew of the existence of the United States could call his name.

But the cunning and vengeful men of Europe had read the American election returns and had perceived therein a crack in the idealistic armor of a President whose Fourteen Points collided with the secret treaties they had signed and with their determination to punish Germany. The world might look to Wilson as the man to lead it toward peace, but his support among his own people was suspect. Georges Clemenceau, David Lloyd George, and Vittorio Orlando were horse traders who demonstrated by the compromises they exacted that they were more adept at this game than the idealistic Wilson.

Wilson had compounded his election blunder by his short-sighted failure to take any Republicans of national stature with him to Paris. The only representative of the opposition party included in the U.S. negotiating team was Henry White, an elderly former diplomat and only nominally a Republican. Others in the delegation were Secretary Lansing, Colonel Edward M. House, Wilson's alter ego, and General Tasker H. Bliss, a military ad-

viser. None of these was likely to argue with a President who was beginning to close his mind against outside advice.

By his decision, Wilson sacrificed the opportunity to make the Republicans partly responsible for the peace settlement. He cut his lines of communication with the Senate which must ratify or reject the treaty and he invited the kind of opposition that always arises when one party attempts to blot the other out of the spotlight at a critical turn of world affairs.

The opposition was not long in coming. On his first trip home, in February 1919, Wilson was the center of a Republican fusillade of criticism when he invited members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in for dinner. In early March thirty-seven GOP senators and two senators-elect of the same party signed a round robin which rejected the proposed form of the League of Nations and suggested delaying consideration of it until after the peace treaty was signed. Lodge, beginning the hate-Wilson period, was one of the originators of this document.

Wilson was defiant as he returned to Paris but there the fighting among the victors was bitter, and in the middle of it, on April 3, he fell ill. This was undoubtedly the beginning of the physical decline that in a few months was to result in paralytic strokes which would leave the country with a President in name only from September 1919 to March 1921, a disability we shall discuss in greater detail in a subsequent chapter.

When he came home to present the treaty, with its attached League covenant, to the Senate on a steamy July day in 1919, the defeat of the President was in the air. Although Wilson agreed to accept reservations which did not require the consent of other treaty signatories, the "irreconcilables," led by Senators LaFollette, William E. Borah of Idaho, and Hiram W. Johnson of California, were not satisfied and they launched a campaign against ratification.

Wilson decided to take his case to the country, despite protests from his friends that his health was not such as to make a speaking trip advisable. Told that his constitution would not stand the strain, Wilson replied, "Then I'll live on my bylaws."

On September 4, the President embarked on a 9500-mile tour

of the West in which he made thirty-seven speeches in twenty-nine cities. In Pueblo, Colorado, on September 25 he suffered a stroke, followed by another on October 2 after he had been rushed back to Washington.

Even the President's physical collapse failed to rouse the country to support his position on the treaty and League covenant. Borah and Johnson, who had been dogging Wilson's footsteps in the West until the President was taken ill, continued to block efforts to compromise. With Wilson opposing Lodge's reservations, the Senate failed in November of 1919 and January of 1920 to ratify the treaty in any form.

Ex-President Taft, who had supported Wilson on the League, blamed the defeat of the covenant on "that mulish enigma, that mountain of egotism and selfishness who lives in the White House."

When I talked with them about it long after, Borah and Johnson always maintained that even if Wilson had been willing to compromise on some essential points, the American people were against U.S. entry into the League and the result would have been the same. Neither of the two great obstructionists ever would concede that, as Henry L. Stimson once put it, if Wilson was wrong, he at least was "wrong in the right direction."

Wilson had played for the verdict of history, as he made it clear he would when he said, "I'd rather lose in a cause that will one day win than win in a cause that will some day lose."

The immediate verdict was against Wilson but history is righting some of the earlier errors in the conception of his presidency. That his stewardship ended in the shadows of recrimination and despair did not obscure the heights to which it had advanced.

But now the presidency was to decline again, as the pendulum swung toward "normalcy."

Warren G. Harding was nobody's choice for President, with the possible exception of his wife and Harry M. Daugherty. Harding, who had some glimmering of his own limitations, never really wanted the responsibility of being chief executive. He preferred the soft, easy life as a senator, with its afternoon rounds of golf and its evening rounds of poker. In the Senate he had not needed

to think, a process he always found somewhat difficult. He could be a back-slapping good fellow, handsome and attractive to the ladies, who always had a crowd of good fellows about him when he hoisted a convivial glass.

When General Leonard Wood and Frank O. Lowden blocked each other off from the prize, the weary delegates to the 1920 Republican national convention took Harding, the product of the justly infamous "smoke-filled room." A clique of Republican senators, who felt Harding would be amenable to their suggestions as President, helped foist this good-natured dolt on the American people.

The people, of course, made him President, sixteen million of them. They voted not for Harding but in reaction against the disillusionment of a war that had solved nothing and against entangling alliances abroad that they were afraid meant America would have to finance and fight future wars in which it had no direct interest.

So Harding went to the White House to become the figurehead leader of a shabby administration that had only a will-o'-the-wisp "normalcy" as its theme despite the presence in its ranks of such outstanding men as Charles Evans Hughes and Herbert Hoover. That the administration was also riddled with graft without Harding's discovering what was going on until shortly before his death was only another indication of the absence of any real presidential direction.

As his former colleagues in the Senate confidently had expected, Harding was amenable to the dictates of Congress. In 1922 he submitted meekly when Congress invaded the executive prerogatives to direct him to name a dirt farmer to the Federal Reserve Board. He did not demur when he was told by Congress to refund the World War I debts, a matter that certainly was within the President's exclusive field of international negotiations.

Harding had gone into the presidency with the mistaken idea that his former colleagues in the Senate would extend to him the same camaraderie, loyalty, and support which members of that exclusive club reserved for their own. He was to learn, as Harry Truman did long years later, that if one graduates from the club

to the presidency, one becomes the object of a jealousy that is common to most humans.

What could be more natural than that a man who had rubbed elbows with a President as an equal could fail to understand how his colleague, and not he, attained that high station? It was only human that any man who had succeeded in winning national office would find it difficult to brush from his eyes the mirage of the White House. Time and again during Truman's occupancy of the executive mansion we newsmen would be asked by a senator or a representative, "Can you imagine that guy being President?" It should be added that most of those who deprecated his ability in his early months as President soon came to respect Truman's administration of the office.

But Harding gave the lawmakers no reason to suspect that he had risen above mediocrity. He wasn't even very knowledgeable in dealing with the Senate, where he had had some experience.

In one of the early days of his White House tenure, Harding marched up to the Senate to lecture his former colleagues on the necessity of keeping appropriations within income. Most of those who heard him knew that, if it came to a showdown, Harding couldn't separate an appropriation from an expenditure. All he succeeded in doing was in getting himself denounced roundly by the senators for interfering in their business. The House, which originates all bills appropriating government money for the departments and bureaus to spend, was furious at this presidential snub.

Harding's lone stand against congressional encroachment on the powers of the executive was a veto of a soldiers' bonus bill—an issue that was to bring much painful head scratching to his successors.

The first of these successors, parsimonious Calvin Coolidge, was a little man in tune with his don't-care times. The American people had weathered the depression of 1921 and things were on the up and up as skirts and the stock market went higher. The people were having themselves a ball and they certainly didn't want any stuffed shirt in the White House crusading for a better world or telling them how to behave.

Coolidge, who had scrabbled his way up the political ladder from a rocky farm in Vermont, had never felt he really could afford a stiff shirt and he had no inclination to stuff it. Keep your mouth shut and let well enough alone was Coolidge's creed.

In his own words, his philosophy was: "When things are going all right, it is a good plan to let them alone." He leavened this with the observation: "We need faith that is broad enough to let the people make their own mistakes."

The little man with the nose that was not quite so sharp as it was depicted in the day's cartoons ran a clean store. When it became overbearingly necessary for him to act, he swept out the Harding grafters. Though he had only an honest New Englander's contempt for them, Coolidge made it a rule never to act until every other alternative was exhausted.

After that the floor was kept tidy, although there was little on his administration's shelves that hadn't been stocked twenty years before. There were a very few bright new labels attached to some of the leftover inventories like German reparations, the World Court, disarmament, and Frank B. Kellogg's ineffectual pact to outlaw war. But the cracker-barrel philosophy prevailed—sit tight and don't move unless you have to.

To the taciturn, dour-faced Coolidge, it was self-evident, as he said, that "America's business is business." With Andrew Mellon in charge of the Treasury, the President's chief mission in life was to reduce taxes and to fend off such "socialistic" schemes as unemployment insurance. He was against this latter, he announced solemnly, because it involved giving workers pay they didn't earn! If business was secure in its profits, what did it matter what happened to the workers and their families in shutdown and change-over periods? Perhaps they could sell apples, as they learned to do later.

However, the spare silent man in the White House had captured the approval of the country. The stirrings of a liberal coalition in Congress were giving him trouble but the majority of people seemed to like his hands-off attitude.

Congress wasn't being quiet the way Coolidge wanted it to be. The lawmakers passed, over his veto, a bill giving military-service

veterans paid-up insurance certificates and Congress also wrote a Japanese exclusion clause into an immigration bill over his opposition.

Then the Republican liberals from the West joined forces with the Democrats to reject his nomination of Charles B. Warren as Attorney General. That involved the famous incident in which Vice-President Charles G. Dawes was napping at a Washington hotel and failed to arrive on time to break a tie to confirm the nominee. Coolidge could scarcely have upbraided his Vice-President, however, for the President himself was a devotee of sleep. He took a two-hour nap daily and was always in bed by ten o'clock at night.

As H. L. Mencken once put it, "Nero fiddled but Coolidge only snored" while the nation went on a binge of speculation that was to lead to a Black Friday which would cost the Republican party twenty years of defeats. Contributing to the long-range decline, Coolidge vetoed two McNary-Haugen bills aimed at countering the unchecked slump in farm income that was to hasten the economic crash. And he turned back "socialism" by vetoing a measure by Senator George Norris of Nebraska for public power operations at Muscle Shoals on the Tennessee River.

Coolidge's surprise announcement from the Black Hills of South Dakota on August 2, 1927, that "I do not choose to run for President in 1928" killed off a third-term movement regarded with such concern by the Senate liberal coalition that it had forced through a resolution opposing any departure from the two-term custom which Washington had originated.

Stubby, intellectual Senator Robert M. LaFollette, Jr., who had picked up the mantle of progressivism from his dead father, led the fight in which eighteen Republicans joined with thirty-seven Democrats and one Farmer-Laborite to strike at potential presidential ambition. Twenty-two Republicans and four Democrats were willing to see Coolidge stand for a second elective term.

That it was a matter of personalities and not principle was demonstrated twelve years later when this same LaFollette was in the vanguard of those urging Franklin Roosevelt to seek a third term. When I chided the Wisconsin senator about his incon-

sistency at that time, he peered owlishly at me from behind his shell-rimmed glasses, grinned, and replied that times had changed and he with them. He would, LaFollette said, cheerfully eat his 1927 words that a third term would be "unwise, unpatriotic and fraught with peril to our free institutions."

Coolidge was obviously disappointed he was not drafted for another term. Nor was he pleased with the party's choice of Hoover. Coolidge once told Secretary of Agriculture Jardine: "That man [Hoover] has offered me unsolicited advice for six years—all of it bad!" If Coolidge was disappointed, he had the satisfaction of feeling that if he had contributed nothing to the presidency, at least he had taken nothing away from it. Coolidge now would have much free time to play the harmonica and he was surprisingly good at it.

Herbert Hoover arrived in the presidency with perhaps the greatest opportunity to prepare himself for the job that had been accorded any man since the days of the "Virginia dynasty," or at least since Martin Van Buren. For eight years Hoover had been a knowledgeable, alert, and working member of the Cabinet. He had studied at first hand the operations of two Presidents. He had had an opportunity to size up their failures as well as their small successes.

In those years Hoover had preserved his reputation as an efficient administrator. He had had, of course, to learn politics from the ground up and perhaps the Cabinet was not a very good training school. As late as 1919, Hoover, who lived abroad for many years, was asking American correspondents to explain to him the difference between the two major U.S. political parties.

In Hoover there was a promise of a return to a measure of idealism in the presidency after the matter-of-fact and barren years since Wilson. In the beginning, Hoover spoke grandly of the ambition to abolish poverty. Despite ominous continuance of the inflationary spiral which he had warned against when he was a Cabinet member, Hoover took office with a note of optimism.

"I have no fears for the future of our country," he said. "It is bright with hope."

He proceeded to outline a conception of the presidency as

broad and as penetrating as any ever held by those who preceded him in the office.

"The President is not only the leader of a party," he said, "he is the President of the whole people. He must interpret the conscience of America. He must guide his conduct by the idealism of our people.

"The presidency is no dictatorship. It is not intended to be. Safeguards are provided to prevent it. Our fathers knew that men were not made for government, but government for men—to aid and to serve them. Our government rests solely upon the will of the people; it springs from the people."

These were noble words but the times were against the round-faced, cherubic-looking President. Hoover was caught in a tide that washed away his dependable graphs, charts, and statistics. And when the tide might have been turned by dramatic action, or even some warmly human emotional appeal, he was incapable of it.

True to his campaign promises, Hoover called Congress into special session within a month of his inaugural. The strongly Republican legislature quickly passed Federal Farm Board legislation. But then there arose the same type of tariff controversy that had proved Taft's undoing.

As the logrolling went on among the lawmakers, the President failed to display the strong front that might have carried the day for him. Instead, he backed timidly away from any stand on rates and on compromises. He explained lamely that he "could not pretend to have the necessary information in respect to many thousands of commodities which determination requires." If the President of the United States, with thousands of workers at his command, couldn't, who could?

By this time Borah, who had championed the new President's farm legislation, was drifting away. Perhaps no President could have charmed the calculating-eyed Idaho senator from his role of great dissenter. But from personal knowledge I can say that Borah never listened to Franklin Roosevelt on the radio for fear that he might be persuaded against his better judgment; he waited until Roosevelt's words were in cold print before digesting them. In any

event, Hoover was not adept enough at the time to keep Borah at his side—one of the relatively small things a President often must do to win the big things.

Hoover wanted a tariff commission with more than cardboard authority. But Borah was lost and when the Idaho senator opened up with his artillery it was on Hoover's sensitive flank. Borah based his whole argument on the grounds that the President was reaching out for too much authority.

Thus Hoover early was put on the defensive for trying to do too much. Perhaps that experience contributed to his timidity in suggesting remedies when the stock market crashed in October 1929.

What now seems obvious is that Hoover was caught in a depression of Coolidge's making. If credit-tightening steps had been taken in 1928, there might have been no economic nose dive in 1929. But Coolidge had maintained the hands-off policy, and Hoover was tied to the Republican tradition that the government should let the economy alone to right itself.

Hoover felt that those who were beginning to suggest massive public works were "playing politics at the expense of human misery." He turned, instead, to Operation Pollyanna. In March 1930, the President said the depression would be over in thirty days. By July he thought the crisis had passed six weeks earlier. In October he was congratulating the American Bankers Association on having "carried the credit system of the nation through a most difficult crisis." Within another twenty months, 3000 banks would have closed their doors.

When John N. Garner of Texas, the Democratic Speaker of the House, introduced a public-works bill covering 3500 projects, Hoover called it "the most gigantic pork barrel ever proposed to the American Congress," as, indeed, it was up to that time.

By 1931, however, the collapsing world economy had forced Hoover into action. He proposed a moratorium on foreign-government debts. He asked for the establishment of a National Credit Association, a Home Loan Bank, and the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. He proposed subsidization of farm-loan banks. He supported the Glass-Steagall bill to free gold reserves and agreed

to federal loans to states for distress aid. The dormant leadership of the presidency was awakening, but, alas, too late.

When Congress passed a soldiers'-bonus bill, Hoover said it would prolong the depression. By that time street-corner apple selling was an accepted profession and "Hoovervilles" were springing up on city dumps. The stage was set for the tragic "bonus march" on Washington of veterans seeking immediate payment on their government insurance.

For weeks there was enacted the pitiful spectacle of veterans and their families being shuttled to Washington by communities which furnished them transportation expenses to get rid of them. A large part of the scum of America floated along to gather in an encampment derisively called "Hooverville." There on the Anacostia River flats in Washington 10,000 lived in destitution and filth.

Week after week the marchers moved en masse on the Capitol, parading and buttonholing members of Congress, lobbying for immediate payment of their insurance claims. The frightened House passed a bill and sent it to the Senate. His back up, Hoover announced he would veto the measure. The Senate killed the bill and Congress quickly passed legislation to finance the return of the veterans to their homes.

Many went but others who couldn't qualify as veterans stayed behind. Washington police tried to move them out but were driven off with brickbats. The president of the Board of District of Columbia Commissioners asked for federal troops and Hoover sent them.

It was a blazing hot day on July 28, 1932, when a mounted squadron of cavalry, accompanied by a platoon of tanks, clattered down Pennsylvania Avenue to the shack town on the flats. From Fort Washington, Maryland, came a battalion of the 12th Infantry, marching smartly in the boiling sun.

In the Munitions Building on Constitution Avenue 300 armed soldiers were bivouacked, ready to surround the White House to protect the President if the situation got out of hand.

General Douglas MacArthur, tall, trim, and resplendent in his two-toned army uniform and polished boots, personally directed

the operations of the troops as they systematically moved the bonus-army stragglers out with tear gas and put the torch to their shacks.

MacArthur was accompanied by his young aide, Major Dwight D. Eisenhower, erect and correct in his stiff army cap and wearing a Sam Browne belt over his uniform coat. In command of the tanks and horse soldiers was the 3rd Cavalry's George Patton, Jr., who had not yet taken to wearing two pistols.

It was a bloodless battle. No shot was fired; no club was used; not even a rock was thrown. But another step toward the forfeiture of the presidency had been taken by the man who, because he occupied the White House and was commander-in-chief of the troops, was blamed for the whole affair.

This was the beginning of a period of desperation in the presidency. The Democrats had nominated Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt of New York as their candidate. While there may have been many who shared at the time columnist Walter Lippmann's view that Roosevelt was "a pleasant man, who, without any important qualifications for the office would very much like to be president," the political tide was running swiftly against Hoover. Perhaps it was significant that on the day after the President formally accepted his second nomination, the Wall Street bears—men who had been able to take the elevator rather than a window exit from their offices after the 1929 crash—raided the stock market.

Fighting sturdily but futilely for re-election, Hoover was plagued by six million unemployed, ten-cent corn, and the spread of panic across the land. His inevitable defeat in the November voting destroyed the last shred of his effectiveness in dealing with the nation's problems and Roosevelt would not help.

At Hoover's invitation, Roosevelt came to the White House to sit politely and uncommunicatively in the Red Room while the international debt crisis was discussed. Firmly, Roosevelt said the problem was not on his doorstep and went back to Hyde Park.

Farm prices were dropping rapidly. Gold was taking flight to Europe. Country banks were folding and long lines of depositors gathered at the withdrawal windows of city banks. The governor

of Michigan closed the banks in his state. The whole economic system was collapsing and the outgoing President felt himself powerless.

"We are at the end of our string," Hoover said. "There is nothing more we can do."

But a man was coming to the White House who would find many things to do. Perhaps not all of them would be good but there would be action in the presidency again.

## 5 The Adventurous Presidency



Inaugural day of March 4, 1933, dawned as gray and bleak as the country's economic outlook. In a Mayflower Hotel suite in Washington a broad-shouldered, thick-chested, handsome man sat in his wheel chair and talked confidently with members of his family and intimates as he waited for his hour to strike. He had prayed in church; his mind was serene. If he knew not fully what to do, he at least would do.

In the White House the outgoing President fussed gloomily with a few lingering details as he closed the books of his administration with a sigh. Soon they were together, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Herbert Hoover, riding down Pennsylvania Avenue toward the Capitol in the same motorcar—the nation's symbol of despair and its promise of renewed hope.

The lowering clouds held tight overhead as Roosevelt, his left hand on a passage in the Bible which read, "For now we see through a glass darkly . . . ,” took the oath of office as President of the United States and turned to the microphone-festooned lectern before him to begin his inaugural address. The wheels of the nation all but stopped as people everywhere turned up their radios and motioned for silence to hear the man who had pledged himself to "a new deal for the American people."

In buoyant, ringing tones that inspired confidence they heard: "This is pre-eminently the time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly. . . . This great nation will endure as it has endured, will revive, and will prosper. So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance."

This was the strong voice of hope and determination speaking, the voice of a President who gave the impression that he knew

where he was going even if, as was true at the time, he had only a vague idea of his ultimate destination.

This was the voice of a man who regarded the presidency as "pre-eminently a place of moral leadership"; who drew on history for his contention that "all our great presidents were leaders of thought at times when certain historic ideas in the life of the nation had to be clarified."

What mattered it, then, that he was to disclose at times an appalling ineffectiveness as an administrator, that he was to improvise and tinker without noticeable advancement in the economy until war came, that he was to come to regard himself as indispensable in office?

The country wanted action and here was a man of action. Here was the man who offered the "leadership alert and sensitive to change" he said the nation had lost in the previous decade. The incredible one hundred days lay immediately ahead.

In the one hundred days following Roosevelt's call of Congress into special session on March 9, 1933, the lawmakers bowed to every whim of the President. If, as Senator Maclay said, Hamilton had his way with Congress, Roosevelt had it even more so.

It would be less than truthful, however, to say that Roosevelt planned it that way. As his intimates testified later, F.D.R. had been thinking in terms of a three-day meeting in which Congress would pass an emergency bill reopening the banks he had ordered closed for a four-day holiday, beginning March 6, under powers his researchers had found in the Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917.

During the political campaign Roosevelt had talked in glowing terms of "economic nationalism" and of social reform in direct appeals to the "forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid." The Democratic candidate's somewhat inchoate ideas had goaded Hoover into the silly assertion that if the New Deal came to power "the grass will grow in streets of a hundred cities, a thousand towns; the weeds will overrun the fields of millions of farms. . . ."

The truth of the matter was that, while ideas were being ground out fresh daily by the "Brains Trust"—Raymond Moley,

Rexford G. Tugwell, and Adolf A. Berle, Jr.—very little had been done toward drafting any coherent program. It was the old story of Wilson and the Fourteen Points; the banners had been hoisted but there was no foundation blueprint on which to build.

The complex banking bill alone was ready and some work had been done on a government economy measure which was to contradict almost all of the spending policies then beginning to take form in Roosevelt's mind.

But the disorganized state of Congress was apparent even to the political amateurs of the new administration, as well as to its old pros. The blight of economic desolation had bitten deep into the legislative branch and its members were afraid. The shuttered banks, the padlocked factories, the freight engines standing cold in the railroad yards, and the breadlines that snaked around whole blocks had unnerved the legislators.

Futilely they had badgered befogged Herbert Hoover with budget-balancing cries while they were battering at him for doing nothing about the cold and the hungry. Congress itself had found no solution and it was ready and eager, as almost no Congress before it, to obey the commands of one man.

It could be said that if the country was ever ripe for dictatorship, the time was then. But despite all the brickbats tossed at him later, Roosevelt was a believer in the fundamental democratic processes. He would not even go as far as Lincoln; he would find some peg in obscure law or in the Constitution upon which to hang the hat of executive action.

But Roosevelt was not one to reject an invitation to advance on the road Congress was opening up to him. If he had no panacea for the panic, none in Congress was to know it. The country was responding to his hopeful talk. Here was the ripe opportunity to experiment with reform and progress. If there was no master plan, the President and his "Brains Trustees" would improvise as they went along.

The White House lights glowed brightly the night of March 8, 1933. In the second floor Oval Room study, next to the Monroe Room where Lincoln had met with his Cabinet, the improvising was beginning.

Tousle-haired Henry A. Wallace, a converted Republican whose odd political excursions we shall examine later, bent over an agricultural map of the United States, pointing out significant areas. The President, garbed in an old sweater, followed intently as Wallace talked with an assist now and then from Tugwell, now Assistant Secretary of Agriculture.

Congress had reached a stalemate in its last previous session in efforts to enact farm-relief measures because it couldn't agree on any solution that Hoover would accept. Wallace felt the time had come to suggest that the problem be turned over to his Agriculture Department.

When Roosevelt nodded his okay to Wallace's ideas, the Secretary went into action quickly. Summoning fifty farm leaders to Washington, he kept them continuously in session for thirty-six hours until they had hammered out a program. No one knew if it would work, but it was at least something to try.

Thus the Roosevelt legislative assembly line moved into gear. Congress passed the banking bill in a day. In the feverish period that followed, members voted for bills they had not read, with texts available only to the party leaders to whom they had been rushed by White House messengers.

As the commands from the President followed each other swiftly, Congress proceeded to divert the course of American life, leaving almost dry the old channel down which had flowed the philosophy that the government should do next to nothing about the economic and social welfare of the people.

Among other fields, government went into the business of providing direct relief to its stricken citizens. If this was not wholly unprecedented, it nevertheless was on a considerably larger scale than the relief Congress made available when it voted fifty cords of wood for the needy in the District of Columbia during the bitter cold winter of 1829.

With a minimum of debate, the 1933 Congress provided jobs for young men, set up a national employment service, voted subsidies for the farmers, arranged for the financing of home and farm mortgages, acted to regulate securities trading, gave help to the railroads, set up the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), and

established the National Industrial Recovery Administration (NIRA). A rider on the latter bill created a Public Works Administration (PWA) with more than three billion dollars to spend.

By the time the lawmakers adjourned on June 16 they had authorized abandonment of the gold standard, had guaranteed bank deposits, had ordered a half billion-dollar cut in government payrolls, and had legalized wine and beer.

For labor there was the forerunner of the Wagner Act in a short provision of the NIRA law which said: "Employees shall have the right to organize and bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing. . . ."

In the one hundred days, Congress had delivered to the President a legislative program that might well have represented the accomplishments of an ordinary decade. Never again, even in wartime, would Roosevelt—or any other President, for that matter—have a Congress so subservient to the executive command.

Experiments with the economy were to continue with some signs of recovery but with a dispiriting bulge of industrial unemployment. Although industrial production began climbing from its stagnation point at Roosevelt's inaugural, there still remained about 13 million jobless. In July the stock market nose-dived and industrial production slumped sharply by November.

At about this point there emerged the lean, emaciated figure of Harry Hopkins, New York social worker and friend of Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt. A great deal more was to be heard later from this man Hopkins, who crowded the "Brains Trustees" and other advisers out of the way, and who was eventually to become the President's shadow and the second most powerful man in the government.

Hopkins took over the Civil Works Administration (CWA) which became the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The National Youth Administration (NYA) was set up and the PWA, which was being operated by Secretary of Interior Harold Ickes, was expanded.

It was mid-1935 and time to be thinking about the 1936 presidential election when Hopkins came to the top of the heap with his ideas that were to incorporate the Santa Claus concept in gov-

ernment. As none of the others about him seemed to do, Hopkins realized that Roosevelt was enjoying his role as the benefactor of the "ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished" to whom he was to dedicate his second administration.

Hopkins's ideas were practical. About eighty-five per cent of the money spent on WPA went into so-called "security" wages for the unemployed, pay based on the prevailing hourly wage but at shorter hours. These people voted and if they could be made to understand that this government largess had been won for them by the heads of local Democratic machines there could be little question about how they would cast their ballots.

So through Hopkins's office there filed a steady stream of mayors of big cities, state officials, and others with their hands out for a share of the money the government was pouring out. Often, to cinch the impression in the public mind that these men were responsible for getting additional grants for their particular areas, Hopkins conducted them to the White House where Roosevelt would give his personal blessing to the projects they had proposed.

Early in 1936 there were 3,400,000 persons on the WPA rolls. If they contributed strategically to Roosevelt's landslide re-election, this support would not have come about by mere chance. Nor was there any evidence that the nine million who still were without jobs had given up hope in the New Deal, which had entered its second phase in 1935 with the passage of the Social Security Act, the Public Utility Holding Company Act, and soak-the-rich taxes.

But the Supreme Court, with conservatives in control, was being troublesome about shooting down the new executive-powered agencies almost as quickly as Congress could set them up. When the Court declared the NIRA unconstitutional, Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes's opinion seemed to block every opening for federal regulation of business procedures, hours, and wages.

Roosevelt responded with the angry demand: "Does this decision mean that the United States government has no control over any economic problem?"

One after another the Court voided major New Deal laws, while Roosevelt raged inwardly and spoke publicly in disparagement of

the Justices' "horse-and-buggy" attitude. By votes varying from a bare 5 to 4 in some cases to 9 to 0 in others, the "Nine Old Men" were agreeing that Congress' delegation to the President of such sweeping powers was unconstitutional.

Other Presidents had had difficulties with the Court and the course on which Roosevelt was about to embark amid a great secrecy of preparations was not unprecedented. Perhaps it was only because the initiative came from Roosevelt and because he did it in the way that he did that such a nation-shaking storm arose.

Since 1800, when the Federalists lost the election and immediately thereafter reduced the size of the Court from six to five members, Congress had been tinkering with the third branch of government. Jefferson's Republicans promptly restored the Court's membership to six and boosted the number to seven in 1807, giving the President the opportunity to appoint two Justices.

On the last day of his tenure as President, John Adams had appointed and a lame-duck Senate had confirmed John Marshall as Chief Justice. Alexander Hamilton had contended that the Constitution gave the Court no direct power to rule on the constitutionality of the laws Congress passed and Marshall's rulings came under hot fire from Andrew Jackson. When the Court reversed a Georgia opinion that the state had jurisdiction over the Cherokee Indians despite their formation of their own nation under a treaty signed with the United States, Jackson is supposed to have said: "John Marshall has made his decision. Now let him enforce it."

Jackson took the novel position in vetoing a bill to recharter the Second Bank of the United States that each public officer had the right to interpret the Constitution according to his own conscience. He said it was the duty of Congress and the President, as much as that of the Court, to decide what legislation was constitutional.

"The opinion of the judges has no more authority over Congress than the opinion of Congress has over the judges, and on that point the President is independent of both," he said. "The authority of the Supreme Court must not, therefore, be permitted to control the Congress or the Executive when acting in their legislative

capacities, but to have only such influence as the face of their reasoning may deserve."

Jackson persuaded Congress to enlarge the Court to nine members and he promptly appointed two States' Rights supporters to the bench. He, like Roosevelt, had been denied any appointments during his first four-year term.

In 1863 Lincoln wanted to be more certain his war policies would not be attacked successfully in the judiciary, and Congress boosted the membership to ten. When the Republican Radicals in Congress took over after Lincoln's death, they reduced the membership to seven by providing that Andrew Johnson could fill no vacancies until the membership reached that level by resignations or deaths. After Ulysses S. Grant became President, Congress quickly increased the membership to nine.

Roosevelt had only to flip the pages of history to establish the precedents for the adventure on which he planned to embark after it became clear the Court was not going to follow the 1936 election returns.

With what approached juvenile glee at the uproar he knew he was going to cause, Roosevelt put Attorney General Homer Cummings at work on a comprehensive plan to enlarge the Supreme Court. He told no one in his Cabinet or Congress anything about it until he was ready to spring his surprise.

In the prankish mood of a Halloweener helping carry off an outhouse, Roosevelt read to his news conference the message he was sending to Congress proposing the appointment of an additional Justice for every member of the Court who failed to retire within six weeks after reaching the age of seventy. This would have permitted him at the time to appoint six new Justices, raising the Court's membership to fifteen.

Always thinking of the political angles, Roosevelt clothed his attack on the Court in the form of a judicial renovation from which dangled fifty new judgeships, plums that might be used to tempt sitting members of Congress who were weary of campaigning for re-election or who might be retired involuntarily by the voters.

The President contended that the Supreme Court docket was so congested that too many litigants were being denied a review

of their cases. He told Congress, "I seek to make Democracy work." He added he had no intention of destroying the Court but merely wanted to infuse new and powerful blood into it.

Few were deceived about the President's real intent. The New York *Herald Tribune* said editorially, "The brutal fact is that President Roosevelt would pack the Supreme Court with six new justices of his own choosing. No President of the United States ever before made the least gesture toward attempting to gain such a vast grant of power."

The *Nation*, supporting the plan, chortled that the President "now presents the Tory judges with the bitterest hemlock cup any Tory has had to quaff." The *Nation* said that if the judges wanted to prevent the packing of the Court, all they had to do was to resign.

Roosevelt had been careful during his 1936 campaign to drop no hint of his Court-packing plan. But he had spoken critically of the "Republican" Court in the 1932 campaign and the GOP orators charged four years later he was planning to attack it. Roosevelt ignored these charges and it was with open-mouthed amazement that his party leaders in Congress greeted his surprise proposal.

Senator Joseph Robinson of Arkansas, the Senate majority leader, a big, bluff but ordinarily a kind man, took his orders from the White House and did his best to carry them out, often under trying circumstances. Joe Robinson knew the minute he laid eyes on this plan that this fight was going to be, as indeed it proved to be, the most trying of his life. He fumed and fussed and cussed in private about it but he was a good soldier and he would carry the banner.

As he always did when he went into a battle of this kind, Roosevelt threw the book at his opponents. He marshaled every resource for what he sensed would be a crucial test between him and Congress. He had brought Congress a long distance up the progressive road he had chosen to travel but now the Court was blocking the road and he must force the laggard mule of a legislature to help him clear the way. He would hold out the carrot; he would wield the whip; he would build the fire.

Watching from the side lines the press corps felt that the concentrated force of a President just re-elected overwhelmingly would be nearly irresistible. It was that—nearly, but not quite, irresistible.

The Roosevelt team was as well organized as any that has represented a President in the inherent struggle with Congress. Thomas Corcoran, the President's then-favorite "Tommy the Cork," divided the leadership of the carrot squad with Joseph Keenan and James Roosevelt, the President's political-minded son.

Robert H. Jackson, an Assistant Attorney General who was to be rewarded with a Supreme Court appointment, supplied the personalized legal arguments. Charles West, a former congressman, worked the friendships he had made on Capitol Hill.

Charles Michelson, the brains of the 1932 smear-Hoover campaign, and his assistant, Edward L. Roddan, were assigned as fire builders who would operate from Washington to stir up public opinion.

Because the Democratic National Committee reposed supinely in his pocket, Roosevelt used it, too. He dispatched big, genial James A. Farley, the national chairman, to the hinterlands. Farley, who knew everybody everywhere, traveled across the country drumming up what passed for popular support for the President's plan. Farley knew the value of a telephone call placed at the right time to the right senator by the right political leader or financial contributor at home. He contrived to have a substantial number of these calls placed.

In Washington, Roosevelt was ready with the whip if the carrot and the fire failed. His Court-packing team met nightly to revise its strategy to fit developments, secure in the knowledge that the full weight of the administration was behind it. Hopkins, who had the power of allocating job-giving projects where they might do the most good, kept in constant touch.

Thus the team had every resource at its command. It could offer federal appointments, promise a needed dam or bridge, and, most important of all, could see to it that co-operating senators were able to announce projects which meant more jobs for the unemployed of their states.

If a senator proved recalcitrant, he might hear from a political boss at home that somebody else was under consideration to replace him when the next election rolled around.

This was raw executive power in action. The wonder remains that it did not succeed in adding to the number of senators who were genuinely supporting the Court-packing plan enough of the wavering and undecided to put it over.

But despite all Roosevelt and his legions could do, the goal became increasingly impossible of attainment. Senator Burton K. Wheeler, Montana Democrat who had been the vice-presidential candidate on the LaFollette Progressive ticket in 1924, led the opposition which picked up strength daily. Beleaguered Joe Robinson became waspish, striking out bitterly at old friends who drifted away to the enemy until one day his tired heart stopped. With him, for all practical purposes, died the Court-packing plan.

Justice Van Devanter, one of the conservative bloc, retired, to the discomfiture of the proponents of the President's bill. The Court, reading the signs of the times, reversed its traditional policy to uphold a state law regulating wages.

The Court fight was irretrievably lost and with it the presidential domination of a Congress so heavily Democratic that at one point shrewd Senator Charles L. McNary of Oregon, the Senate's minority leader, commanded a Republican opposition reduced to fifteen of the ninety-six members.

Another President might have retired gracefully from the field of battle, content in the knowledge that he had forced the Court to reorient its course as it did in upholding the Railway Labor Act, the Frazier-Lemke Farm Mortgage Moratorium measure, and the Wagner Labor Relations Act—but not Roosevelt. He moved speedily to retrieve as much as possible of the lost ground.

When Senator Alben Barkley of Kentucky, who had been Robinson's assistant, phoned Roosevelt to say Senate opponents were seizing upon Robinson's death for a final attack on the corpse of the Court bill, the President replied with the famed "Dear Alben" letter.

Addressing Barkley as "Acting Majority Leader of the Senate," Roosevelt belabored those he said were taking advantage of

"what, in all decency should be a period of mourning. . . ." He then proceeded to repeat his arguments in favor of the bill.

The letter tagged Barkley as Roosevelt's man for the important and powerful post of majority leader. While Barkley was far from the amiable rustic he was portrayed in some quarters at the time, he was compliant. He was willing, as Senator Pat Harrison of Mississippi would not have been, to go down the line for Roosevelt's program. Harrison, a candidate for the leadership post, had been talking of compromising the Court bill. Roosevelt knew the value of having his own man at the wheel in the Senate. If the Court bill was lost, he had other business with Congress.

Harrison, a cigar-chewing southern conservative of the old school, was shrewd, powerful, and gregarious. By comparison, Barkley was a large, friendly collie of a man with liberal leanings. He was to grow in stature with the years but was not regarded at the time as among the more brilliant senators.

Harrison was a sharp strategist who probably would have won his battle if the matter had been left to the Senate alone. But, of course, it wasn't. The hand of Harry Hopkins showed in the results when the things he had to offer proved valuable enough to influence at least two decisive votes. When the seventy-five Senate Democrats assembled for their showdown and took a secret ballot, on motion of Senator James F. Byrnes of South Carolina, Barkley won 38 to 37. Among those who voted for Barkley was a rather obscure senator from Missouri, named Harry S. Truman. We shall see considerably more of him later.

Roosevelt had his man in the Senate. His rear was protected by Barkley and now he would attack. He would punish those who had beaten him; he would teach them that they had won only a skirmish in the war that was to continue for a long time.

In Roosevelt there was a strong streak of vindictiveness; he could be petty while he was being grand. Reporters who wrote uncomplimentary things about him felt the sting of his public lash. They would be told to put on a dunce cap and stand in a corner or they were "awarded" an Iron Cross. Politicians who opposed him at a crucial point found that he never forgot a slight, never forgave a man who turned away when he was needed. As we shall see

later, Barkley might have been President but for one critical outburst against F.D.R.

Beyond the desire to punish those who had defeated him, there obviously was in Roosevelt's thinking in 1938 the need to create a diversion which would help take the public mind off the troubled economic situation. Despite all of the pump priming of the earlier years, the country had been hit by a new business depression in the 1937-38 period. Sit-down strikes chilled the businessmen. The farmers were plagued by crop surpluses. Unemployment again was more than 10 million.

Roosevelt also was looking ahead at the growing threat of world conflagration. The dictators were flexing their muscles, thumbing their noses at his first, tentative efforts to stave off the circumstances that might bring about another world war. Undoubtedly he felt his position in world affairs was weakened by a Congress he regarded as becoming more reactionary and more unmanageable each day.

Roosevelt always was adept at clothing many of the real motives for his actions in the bright raiments of a crusade for a cause. So it was that he used the old liberal-vs.-conservative text when he went to the people with a June 24, 1938, fireside radio chat to complain of those in Congress he said "have consistently refused to cooperate with the mass of the people. . . ."

The liberals, he said, recognized that "the new conditions throughout the world call for new remedies . . ." while the conservatives did not "recognize the need for government itself to step in and take action to meet these new problems. . . ."

Avoiding the mistake that Wilson had made in 1918, Roosevelt said he was not asking the people to vote in the November elections for Democrats, as opposed to Republicans. Nor, he added—and he must have grinned slyly to himself at that point—was he going to take part in Democratic primaries.

But as head of the party, he continued, he felt he had every right to speak "in those few instances where there may be a clear issue between candidates for the Democratic nomination" in the liberal-vs.-conservative controversy. If he was inclined to group

among the conservatives those who had opposed his Court plan, he did not mention it.

At an open-air meeting on a hot summer day in Barnesville, Georgia, Roosevelt fired the first shot. Standing bareheaded on a bunting-draped platform, the President asked the voters of Georgia not to return to Washington conservative Walter F. George, a thunderer to whom the Senate listened with more than usual attention.

Prefacing his remarks with the observation that George could not possibly be classed as a liberal, Roosevelt said he wanted to make it clear that the senator was, "and I hope always will be, my personal friend."

"He is beyond question a gentleman and a scholar . . ." the President said, but he added, "I am impelled to make it clear that on most public questions he and I do not speak the same language. . . ."

George, sitting in dignified but wrathful silence, arose when Roosevelt was through to reply, "Mr. President, I accept your challenge. . . ." The purge was on.

Roosevelt trained his guns primarily on Senators George, Millard Tydings in Maryland, and Guy Gillette in Iowa. Hopkins sent the WPA into Kentucky and Roosevelt went personally into the state to save Barkley from defeat by Governor A. B. (Happy) Chandler—one of the few successful forays the President made. When the firing was over, Representative John O'Connor of New York could be counted as the sole victim of the purge that failed.

George, grown mellower with the years, could laugh about it later. He liked to recall the remark he made when he and Senator Ellison D. (Cotton Ed) Smith of South Carolina, another who had felt the flick of the Roosevelt lash, were discussing the purge shortly after it was over. Smith observed that Roosevelt was his own worst enemy. "Not while I'm alive," George cracked back.

George always remained puzzled why a politician of Roosevelt's broad experience should have trapped himself in a situation where, by interfering in local elections, he almost automatically guaranteed the return of men he would like to have seen defeated.

"I guess it was just Roosevelt's unmitigated gall," George told

me one time when we were chatting about it. "Why, when he got through asking my people to defeat me, he turned around to me and said, 'God bless you, Walter.' I'll tell you I didn't feel much like blessing him then."

The rejection of the Court bill and the failure of the purge might have discouraged an ordinary President but this was no ordinary man. He was confident the people were behind him and there were few in the press corps who traveled about with him who cared to dispute this. There remained a worshipful air in the crowds; the people wanted almost literally to touch the hem of his garments. Women smiled warmly and men waved enthusiastically everywhere he went.

His voice on the radio was the song of the sixpence, with a pocketful of dreams. He was the personification of optimism in a pessimistic world. His critics could shout, but he had won a place in the hearts of the mass of the people.

Nevertheless, this popular hero who had been re-elected in 1936 by the majorities of all of the states except Maine and Vermont was on the political defensive when the world moved into the fateful year of 1939. His fences in Congress were down and there was more than a little merit in the cynical observation that Roosevelt's decision to abandon his crusade for social security for one in behalf of national security was not dictated wholly by international developments.

Like Woodrow Wilson, Roosevelt had hoped at the beginning of his stewardship to devote most of his energies to domestic problems. But in the fall of 1938 Hitler had annexed Austria and had moved into Czechoslovakia and Chamberlain's "peace in our time" had begun to crumble.

The European war began and the man in the White House turned his thoughts to "Short-of-war" moves to help the Allies. There was on the way another broad expansion in the powers of the presidency. There was also at hand the shattering of a precedent that had stood since George Washington's time.

## 6 The Third Term



In Franklin D. Roosevelt there existed a boyish delight with the idea of breaking precedents. That he should be the man who first served more than eight years as President was not surprising in the light of his love for experiment and his desire to leave a lasting imprint on history.

Early in 1936 he had toyed with a new version of an old idea that, if he had undertaken it and had been successful, might have changed the whole course of American political events.

It was a rare period of discouragement for Roosevelt. The conservatives in Congress were becoming more and more successful in balking the forward movement of the New Deal. Businessmen had organized the Liberty League to oppose as unconstitutional most of the reforms Roosevelt felt were vital, and the enemy had been joined by John W. Davis, the 1924 Democratic presidential nominee, and Alfred E. Smith, the 1928 standard-bearer.

With so many in his own party resisting him, Roosevelt began to turn over in his mind the idea of organizing a new liberal party of his own. Men had tried this before, but the idea that a President might cut himself adrift from the party which helped elect him and fly a new banner in his second-term bid was revolutionary enough to intrigue Roosevelt. He envisioned the possibility of a clean break with the conservatives, whom he felt he had carried piggy-back at election time only to have them turn on him as soon as the voting was over.

Quietly the word went out to trusted lieutenants to make some soundings. Among those who got the word was a tall, dark-haired, distinguished-looking young fellow named Clinton P. Anderson, who was running the regional field office at Salt Lake City, Utah, for Harry Hopkins's relief administration.

A liberal who had been Democratic state chairman of New Mexico, Anderson had identified himself early with the Roosevelt

forces and had been accepted as one of the trusted inner circle. Anderson, who later was to become Secretary of Agriculture and subsequently a United States senator, had contact with many individuals in eleven western states through the relief organization.

His assignment in the hush-hush survey was to forage the field for outstanding independents who could be enlisted in the cause of forming a new party with Roosevelt as its nominee. He was asked to find out how many Democratic officials would be willing to take a flier with the President if he chose to run on a new party ticket. In describing his efforts later, Anderson confessed with a grin that "I got a little more active politically than a relief administrator should be."

Harold L. Ickes, a political maverick by instinct, was one of the guiding lights of the survey, operating from his position as Secretary of the Interior. Frank Walker of Montana, later to become the party's national chairman, sounded out the financial fat cats. George Creel, whose ability as a publicist was widely recognized, began to put together a tentative campaign blueprint.

The impracticability of the whole scheme caused its eventual collapse. It was discovered that it would be a physical impossibility to get the President's name on the ballot in many states if he ran as a third-party nominee or an independent. Unless he could run everywhere, Roosevelt preferred to remain regular.

The survey, of course, was not a total loss since it proved to the satisfaction of most of those concerned that Roosevelt had personal strength in a great many places where it counted, if he chose to attack the third-term tradition in 1940.

Roosevelt was to end the tradition with the eventual result that the adoption in 1951 of the Twenty-second Amendment made the two-term limitation a part of the Constitution. But in their reaction to the election of Roosevelt four times, the people may have acted more emotionally than wisely in making it impossible for them to avail themselves of any President's services for more than eight years—short of cumbersome repeal of this provision or some upheaval involving force.

While they had moved to destroy the power of a President to perpetuate himself in office, the people also had tinkered with

the effectiveness of any second-term presidency by casting the chief executive in the role of a political lame duck the moment he was re-elected. Eisenhower, the first of the Twenty-second's lame ducks, was to demonstrate, however, that there were assets, as well as liabilities, in this position.

Even Washington, who originated the two-term tradition, recognized the possibility might arise that the people would wish to continue a President in office indefinitely.

"I can see no propriety in precluding ourselves from the services of any man, who on some great emergency shall be deemed universally most capable of serving the Republic," Washington wrote Lafayette.

Hamilton, writing in the Federalist papers, shared this view. He said it is "necessary to enable the people, when they see reason to approve of his conduct, to continue him in the station, in order to prolong the utility of his talents and virtues, and to secure to the Government the advantage of permanency in a wise system of administration."

Washington might have given more attention to the pleas of Gouverneur Morris and John Jay, who thought it imperative for him to serve a third term, if the Father of his Country had not been "splattered with the mud of political criticism" and had not been ill and tired at the end of his second term.

It seems barely conceivable that Grant, whose eight years in the White House bore the smudge of incompetency and the stain of the grafting of those about him, should have been the first to present a formidable challenge to the two-term tradition.

The bewhiskered, cigar-smoking general had been the unanimous choice of the Republican conventions of 1868 and 1872. But the House of Representatives had headed off an immediate bid for a third term by its 234 to 18 passage of a resolution saying, in almost the exact language the Senate used more than fifty years later, that a departure from the two-term tradition would be "unwise, unpatriotic, and fraught with peril to our free institutions."

When Grant came back from a world tour in September 1879, the general was greeted as a conquering hero on a triumphal journey from San Francisco to his home at Galena, Illinois. A few

weeks later he was off to a reunion of the Army of the Cumberland at Chicago and 100,000 persons poured into the city to acclaim him.

The noise and the plaudits convinced Grant that he had a chance for another term. Besides, Mrs. Grant had liked living in the White House and wanted to go back.

So Grant progressed from one statement to another. At first he said, "I shall not gratify my enemies by declining what has not been offered me." Shortly, however, he was saying, "I cannot decline if the nomination is tendered without seeking on my part." His friends backed this up with assertions that he would accept the nomination if it came in the right way.

In the Chicago convention in June 1880, General James A. Garfield of Ohio stole the show—and the nomination. Thus ended, in the ashes of Grant's bitter recriminations against his friends, the first concerted attempt to break the tradition.

William McKinley would have none of this kind of nonsense. When there was third-term talk in 1901, he scuttled it with the statement, "I not only am not and will not be a candidate for a third term, but would not accept nomination for it, if it were tendered to me. . . ."

McKinley's successor, Theodore Roosevelt, might have been the first man to occupy the White House more than eight years if he had not been impulsive. Roosevelt always talked too much, especially when he was excited, and in the flush of his first elective victory in 1904, he closed the door when he said, "The wise custom which limits the President to two terms regards the substance and not the form. Under no circumstances will I be a candidate for or accept another nomination."

Of course, Roosevelt changed his mind when he came to believe that his hand-picked successor, William Howard Taft, had surrendered to the Republican old guard. Like his distant relative, who was to be President later, T.R. bothered little about consistency and he blandly explained his try for the 1912 nomination on the grounds that just because he had declined a third cup of coffee in 1904 didn't mean that he never intended to drink any more coffee.

In launching his epic "Bull Moose" campaign of 1912, Roosevelt was testing tradition less than he was seeking innovation of the kind Grant had hoped to bring about—a comeback by a President after a lapse of four years. In later years Roosevelt opposed hardening the two-term tradition into a constitutional amendment. He felt the people "are fit to take care of themselves and stand in no need of an irrevocable self-denying ordinance."

The Democratic platform of 1912 had contained a plank, urged upon the party by William Jennings Bryan, pledging action toward a constitutional amendment limiting presidential tenure to one term. But Woodrow Wilson studiously avoided mentioning it in the campaign that followed.

It never seemed to enter Wilson's mind that one day he would have to yield his power, and the tragedy of his physical collapse near the close of his second term made even more poignant the broken President's lingering hope that he might be nominated again in 1920. He had sent Bainbridge Colby to the San Francisco convention to see if the prize could be claimed, but the mission was fruitless.

Dour-faced Calvin Coolidge shifted from one position to another in the obvious hope that he might have more than the regularly allotted time in the White House. He said at one point that "it is difficult to conceive how one man can successfully serve the country for a term of more than eight years." Later he observed that while he was in favor of the two-term tradition, "I do not think that the practice applies to one who has succeeded to part of a term as Vice-President."

Perhaps Coolidge placed too much faith in the ability of Republican politicians to read between the lines when he rocked them back on their heels with the statement in 1927, "I do not choose to run for President in 1928." That Coolidge believed he would be drafted is rather well documented. But sadly enough the draft failed to come off and it was left to Roosevelt to shatter the tradition.

The methods Roosevelt used to achieve what must now be regarded as an almost inevitable result deserve examination because of the reservoirs of hidden executive power which they

disclose. But they must be viewed also from the standpoint of whether any President, caught in the wave of a crisis, should be forced to swim along with it until his constitutional marker is reached, or whether he may be permitted to strike out on a bold course he cannot conceivably complete if the time allotted to him is limited.

With no measured course laid out before him, F.D.R. struck out boldly. Who can say that a President whose time would have been up in 1940 could have badgered Congress into repealing the Neutrality Act, instituting "cash-and-carry" export of munitions, furnishing the British with "out-dated" planes and arms, trading them "over-age" destroyers for naval-base leases, and instituting a program to build 50,000 planes? What Congress would have listened except one that sensed Roosevelt was going to be around for some time to come?

The average politician's instincts are as acute as those of the buzzard. A presidency that is dying brings these birds wheeling and diving from the sky. Witness what happened to Herbert Hoover in 1931 and 1932 when it became apparent to all except the President that he could not be re-elected. The Republicans who should have been supporting the President, knowing that he would be renominated, joined gleefully in clobbering him.

Roosevelt avoided this carrion attack by the simple expedient of keeping everyone guessing about his intentions. Even those conservative Democrats who would gladly have hamstrung him if they dared, hesitated to take on a President who appeared to be leading a popular cause and who could be around another four years to mete out the kind of punishment their careers might not survive.

For Roosevelt the Republicans, the recognizable enemy in front, could always be dealt with. It was the fire from the flanks and the rear that he was determined to shut off. He would use every means at his command—and some of them were not pretty—to accomplish the end that he saw rather clearly through the dark glass of 1940. America was going to war and he, in his judgment, was the only man who was qualified to lead the country.

There is no indisputable evidence of the timing of Roosevelt's

decision to seek a third term. Certainly it was very much in his mind after his triumphant re-election in 1936, a result he interpreted as a mandate to complete the New Deal's social reforms. By this time he had become convinced that years would be needed to gain this objective—possibly more than the four additional he had just been granted. So he would dissemble for a while and wait for developments. He began his campaign with a grandiose declaration at a March 4, 1937, Democratic victory dinner that he was planning to retire after his second term was over.

"My great ambition on January 20, 1941," he said, "is to turn over this desk and chair in the White House to my successor, whoever he may be, with the assurance that I am at the same time turning over to him as President a nation intact, a nation at peace, a nation prosperous, a nation clear in its knowledge of what powers it has to serve its own citizens, a nation that is in a position to use these powers to the full in order to move forward steadily to meet the modern needs of humanity. . . ."

He was smiling, clear-eyed, and confident as he laid down these conditions to the applauding Democratic diners, as if to say he believed all of these aims could be accomplished in the time remaining in his second term. He was, of course, leaving the barn door wide open to trot out the third-term horse if he chose to do so later.

The game went on, Roosevelt playing it with relish. Democratic Governor George H. Earle of Pennsylvania came out with a third-term statement, observing that there was nobody else in the Democratic party who was "knee-high in stature, mentally or morally, to Franklin D. Roosevelt."

When Fred W. Perkins of the Pittsburgh Press asked the President at a June White House press conference if he would comment on Earle's statement, Roosevelt replied with a broad smile, "The weather is very hot."

Robert Post of the *New York Times* bored in with a question as to whether Roosevelt was willing to say if he would accept a third term.

"Bob Post should put on a dunce cap and stand in the corner," Roosevelt replied with some irritation.

Perkins then wanted to know if the March victory-dinner statement fully covered the third-term situation.

"Fred Perkins should don a dunce cap likewise," Roosevelt fired back.

This sort of byplay was grist for Roosevelt's mill. It presented him to the country as an executive who was deeply immersed in the important job he had to do and who was likely to lose patience with those who suggested he had any future political ambitions.

But the underground was at work. Hopkins had passed the word that the boss would be available again in 1940 and to play it cozy and not overdo it too early.

It was necessary, however, to keep the subject before the people, who had a way of forgetting such important matters in their enthusiasm over a world series or some football game.

In September, then, it was Democratic Governor Frank Murphy of Michigan, widely credited with permitting the sit-down strike to get a strangle hold on the American economy, who blossomed out with the statement that "it may be necessary to call upon Mr. Roosevelt, in the public need, to run for a third term."

F.D.R. was properly demure. He turned off press-conference inquiries on the subject as "iffy" questions he said he never answered. He was, at times, indignant that anybody should bring the matter up. He was, in a word, receptive, as we all could sense.

In January 1938, the United Mine Workers endorsed Roosevelt for a third term. About this time Charles Michelson was saying in a column distributed by the Democratic National Committee that F.D.R. would definitely prefer a case of the hives to a third term "but circumstances might arise where it might be impossible for him to lay down his burden."

In the months that followed, the elimination of possible contending candidates began. Roosevelt once had toyed with the idea that he might develop Hopkins as his successor, but this had gone by the boards because Hopkins's health was terrible and his relations with the Democratic politicians worse.

As he looked over those who might succeed him, Roosevelt found something wrong with each. He could keep most of the hopefulets in the background merely by remaining silent. If he felt

there was a chance that one might step out into the limelight, he usually found a way to keep him in step, as he did by appointing Paul V. McNutt of Indiana as Federal Security Administrator. The white-haired, handsome McNutt accepted this post with the obvious belief that Roosevelt was grooming him for higher things, but soon discovered his error.

Off and on, there was a great deal of Roosevelt talk about Secretary of State Cordell Hull as presidential timber. The President appeared to blow hot and cold about Hull. But the mere fact that Roosevelt himself was bypassing Hull to conduct his own foreign relations in almost every critical situation indicated rather clearly that F.D.R. gave no real consideration to his Cabinet member as a successor.

There was one man the President couldn't muzzle nor control. John Nance Garner, the Vice-President, was a political character in his own right, with a substantial following of conservatives. He had supported Roosevelt loyally in the early New Deal days but Garner was showing increasing signs of being fed up with the spending program. For his own part, Roosevelt put a large share of the blame for the failure of the Court-packing plan on Garner's doorstep, contending that when he had detailed the Vice-President to work out a compromise settlement, Garner had surrendered to the bill's opponents. This was not true, because the bill had no chance, but Roosevelt declined to believe that.

Garner would have to be taken into account in any third-term bid, but Roosevelt was confident he could dispose of the Vice-President when the time came.

James A. Farley, the Democratic National Chairman, also had been bitten by the presidential bug and this presented something of a personal problem to Roosevelt. He could keep Farley tied up merely by not telling the national chairman anything about what he intended to do. But he felt he needed Farley's political savvy and the chairman's party contacts, because the two-term tradition might prove exceedingly difficult to break. So he played along with Farley with a half promise that early in 1940 he would take himself out of consideration for that year's nomination.

Armed with somewhat similar information, Garner announced

in December 1939 he would be a candidate for President. Garner had no real expectation of getting that nomination, but that was his way of saying he was against a third term.

When Roosevelt said he had no objection, Farley let his name go into the Massachusetts primary. At that point, Roosevelt apparently decided that there was no hope Farley could be kept on to manage the third-term campaign and the President cut his old friend off his list. When F.D.R. silently permitted the entry of his name in the Illinois and Wisconsin primaries, Farley and Garner became sitting ducks.

Perhaps Roosevelt might have been willing to retire had not Hitler marched into Poland on September 1, 1939, setting off a chain of events that step by step brought America nearer war.

The year had been a disappointing one for Roosevelt. He had found that he could not dissuade the dictators from their aggressive ventures abroad. At home, a conservative coalition had grown up in Congress that was balking at his proposals. The isolationists in Congress had raised their voices to a high pitch.

It was in this era that I sat one day in the office of Senator William Borah and heard the sparse-haired statesman from Idaho say he had better information than the State Department—that there would be no war. When it came I had the dubious satisfaction of handing him a copy of the *Washington Star*, with a bannerline reading: "Germans Attack Poles Trapped in West."

Even if Borah had been right, it was the judgment of most of us who followed Roosevelt's moves closely that the President would have found any required number of reasons why he felt it imperative to attempt to win a third term. The war, of course, provided an overriding excuse and it made so very easy the political arrangements aimed at carrying this out.

By January 1940 insiders like Senator James F. Byrnes of South Carolina had heard Roosevelt's explanation that, despite his dislike for the necessity of trying to break the two-term tradition, he could see no other Democrat who had a chance to win. The President made this official early in July, when he brought together at the White House for dinner the big city bosses on whom he must lean heavily to produce the atmosphere of a "draft" nomination.

These bosses, like Mayor Ed Kelly of Chicago and National Committeeman Ed Flynn of New York, were practical politicians who wanted to win. They cared not a fig for the two-term tradition and they agreed with Roosevelt he was the only Democrat who could reverse the trend of the 1938 mid-term elections, when the Republicans had strengthened their positions in the Senate and the House.

So it was that in the torrid days of July a Democratic convention that had no choice met in Chicago's west-side Stadium to go through the motions of renominating a man who had made it impossible for the people themselves to select any other man as one of the two alternative candidates for whom they could vote in November.

As we correspondents moved about among the sweating delegates and heard them grumble resignedly about the prearranged state of affairs, we might have stopped—if we could have found the time—to reflect that we were tramping the aisles of history. A President was about to be nominated for a third time and, unless we were all haywire, he was almost certain of re-election.

Typically, Roosevelt was devious to the last. He sent faithful Alben Barkley to keynote the convention with an apocryphal speech in which the Kentucky senator told the disbelieving delegates that F.D.R. "has never had and has not today any desire or purpose to continue in the office of President." In his message to the convention, delivered by Barkley, Roosevelt said that "all the delegates are free to vote for any candidate"—thus including himself.

The President had dispatched Hopkins and Byrnes to Chicago with instructions to take care of his interests. The doughty Byrnes established himself at the Stevens Hotel, threw out his communication lines, and began passing the word that Roosevelt was available.

Across the street at the Blackstone Hotel, Hopkins set himself up in the same suite which had provided the "smoke-filled room" from which Harding's nomination had emerged in 1920. Hopkins plopped his thin form down, threw one leg over the arm of his chair, and began dealing with the labor leaders and the city bosses

for the real prize that Roosevelt wanted, nomination by acclamation, without the formality of a roll call.

But Farley and Garner resisted all the pressure the administration could exert. They remained determined that their names would be presented to the convention and that there would be a roll call even if, as Farley said, he got only one vote.

When it appeared that the two old pros would fight to the end, Mayor Kelly swung into action. A big, bushy-haired Irishman with a gift for blarney, Kelly knew how to manufacture enthusiasm where there was an almost total absence of this essential product.

Kelly had sent his Superintendent of Sewers, Thomas D. McGarry, to a small room in the basement of the Stadium. Stationed there before a microphone which was hooked into the loud-speaker system, McGarry awaited the signal to do his part in attempting to stampede the convention.

At the completion of Barkley's reading of Roosevelt's message, the signal came.

"We want Roosevelt," McGarry bellowed over the loud-speakers. As some in the startled crowd took up the chant and a demonstration began, McGarry continued, "The world needs Roosevelt," "New York wants Roosevelt," "America needs Roosevelt," "Illinois wants Roosevelt."

As it went out on the radio to those who were listening at home, it seemed that all the delegates wanted Roosevelt. As a matter of fact, if they had been left to their own devices, a majority undoubtedly would have supported Roosevelt without all the theatricals.

The creation of the bandwagon psychology, however, was designed to discourage those delegates who might still be backing Farley and Garner and to make it appear that the two men were merely being petulant in their opposition to a third term.

When the roll finally was called, the stage had been so well set that Roosevelt had  $946\frac{1}{3}$  of a total of 1100 votes. Farley got  $72\frac{9}{10}$  votes and Garner, 61, with Senator Tydings and Hull sharing the handful that remained.

Hopkins and Byrnes had accomplished their principal mission. But now they were to receive an even more difficult assignment.

Roosevelt was not satisfied with dictating his own nomination; he also was going to shut the delegates out from any free choice of a vice-presidential candidate.

Byrnes had maintained a close liaison with the party regulars and he knew there was smoldering dissatisfaction among them, particularly with Hopkins's highhanded tactics. Hopkins had been particularly arrogant in whipping the regulars into line for Roosevelt and they were aching for a chance to get even with this political upstart.

Byrnes knew that the situation was touch and go on the morning of July 18 when he walked into a conference room at the Blackstone where several top Democrats were asking each other who the President's choice for his running mate would be.

Sitting in a cloak stall adjacent to the room, waiting for the conference to break up, I heard through the thin partition Byrnes's voice placing a telephone call to the White House. In a moment the connection was made. After the preliminary greetings were over, one half of the conversation went this way:

"Well, Mr. President, have you made up your mind yet about second place on the ticket?"

There was an interval of silence. It seemed that the President had made up his mind and the tone of Byrnes's next statement made it apparent he was taken aback.

"Oh," Byrnes said a little incredulously, "you want Henry?"

More silence on our end.

"Yes," Byrnes spoke up, "we can put him over all right, if you really want him."

Another brief silence.

"Yes, he probably will help out with the farmers," Byrnes agreed.

More silence.

"Well, I think I can get Clyde Herring [senator from Iowa] to put him in nomination. We'll get on it right away. We'll take care of it."

The simple process of deduction made it certain, as far as I was concerned, that Roosevelt had chosen Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace, an Iowan and a former Republican, for the No. 2 place on the ticket.

It would have been difficult for Roosevelt to have named any other prospective running mate about whom there was likely to be less enthusiasm among the bulk of the delegates. Wallace was widely regarded as not only an impractical dreamer but something of a mystic. And the President's choice of him was resented as a slap at the party wheel horses, particularly at Speaker of the House William B. Bankhead, an avowed candidate for second place.

Byrnes didn't get Herring and when Wallace's name was presented to the convention by Frank O'Connor of Iowa the spontaneous boos outswelled the cheers. Bankhead and Paul McNutt got ovations when they were placed in nomination. The delegates were in a mood to assert their independence of one-man domination by taking into their own hands the choice of the vice-presidential nominee.

Roosevelt boiled over at this impudence of the delegates. When Hopkins called him to say that there was trouble about the vice-presidential nomination, Roosevelt stormed: "Well, damn it to hell, they will go for Wallace or I won't run, and you can jolly well tell them so."

In a similar telephone conversation Byrnes was authorized to spread the word Roosevelt would not accept the presidential nomination if his choice for Vice-President were rejected. Byrnes went from delegation to delegation asking the voting members pointedly if they were interested in nominating a President or if they had come there to nominate a Vice-President.

To cap this, the President sent his wife to tell the convention that because of the serious international situation F.D.R. could not leave his job as chief executive to campaign. Although Mrs. Roosevelt was not enthusiastic about the choice of Wallace for second place on the ticket, her short address to the convention was keyed to the theme that the delegates should "rise above considerations which are narrow and partisan" to give the President what he desired.

Farley considered that Mrs. Roosevelt's appeal had tipped the scales. In any event, Wallace managed to accumulate a fraction more than 626 votes on the first ballot to Bankhead's 329 and won

the nomination. McNutt might have upset this result if he had remained in the race but he withdrew with the emotional statement that Roosevelt "is my Commander-in-Chief—I follow his wishes and I am here to support his choice for Vice-President of the United States." Unfortunately for him, McNutt's political sacrifice went unrewarded.

A few minutes after midnight on July 19, the man whose will had been done spoke soothingly to the convention by radio from the White House. He said he had intended to announce that under no conditions would he accept renomination. But the European war had begun and he had found himself "in a conflict between deep personal desire for retirement on the one hand and that quiet, invisible thing called conscience on the other."

"Lying awake, as I have on many nights, I have asked myself whether I have the right as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and the Navy to call on men and women to serve their country or to train themselves to serve and at the same time decline to serve my country in my personal capacity if I am called upon to do so by the people of my country," he said. Then he added:

"Only the people themselves can draft a President. If such a draft should be made upon me, I say to you in the utmost simplicity, I will, with God's help, continue to serve with the best of my ability and with the fullness of my strength."

So far as the Democratic convention was concerned, the "draft" had been accomplished. It was, however, in sharp contrast to the manner in which the Republicans had gone about choosing their candidate, a contender who was to give the "champ" some anxious moments in one of the wildest campaigns in American history.

## 7 The Dark Horse



"We want Willkie! We want Willkie! We want Willkie!"

This organized, rhythmic chant, booming down from the galleries in Philadelphia's echoing Convention Hall, helped Wendell L. Willkie upset the old pros and win the Republican nomination for President in 1940 as the people's dark-horse choice.

That Willkie was flattened by a third-term steam roller fueled by the imminence of war does not detract from the amazing performance of this political tyro who left deeply imbedded footprints on American politics.

Willkie lacked the golden notes of a Bryan. He had none of the war-hero aura of a Grant nor the intellectual snob appeal of a Wilson. He was no crime buster nor important officeholder, as were some of his opponents. He was, instead, a public-utility company president in an era when businessmen were scarcely in good repute with the voters.

The country boy from Indiana, who had taken Wall Street in stride, was never President. But his rise to challenger reversed the trend that denies the average American any practical voice in the selection of major party nominees from whom he must choose his chief executive on Election Day.

Willkie was not the pick of the politicians who make it their business to select presidential candidates. But he beat them by a simple device—he made them afraid that he was, in truth, the favorite of the people and if they rejected him they might be throwing away their chance of winning the presidency.

When he thinks about it, the American voter is proud to say that he selects his own Presidents. The catch is, of course, that he seldom thinks about the matter at all and has little consciousness of the elements that combine in nominating two major candidates every four years.

The typical American sees, hears, and reads about the party

nominating conventions without paying too much attention to what goes on behind the scenes. Usually, he accepts these conventions as a symbol of democracy at work, a display of free men going about their business of making a free choice.

It seldom occurs to him, for instance, that the professional politicians almost always control these affairs, though rarely do they appear to do so. Neither is it always apparent that rather often these conventions present a choice between Tweedledum and Tweedledee, men whose philosophies of government are not much different from each other, no matter how you slice it.

The assembled delegates to these conventions may give the appearance of a composite of America, as if a Kansas wheat field had sprouted on the sidewalks of New York. But these delegations are not always what they seem. It is true some are chosen by the direct vote of the home folk but many others represent political interests more practical than altruistic.

Of the delegates, a large number are individuals who had been willing to devote to local politics the time the average American should, but doesn't. They are the ones willing to grub in the precincts, who run for local office or manage local campaigns, who attend rallies, and who, in short, identify themselves with a political cause.

To these people the chance to attend a convention as a delegate or an alternate comes as a reward for faithful services. But it is an expensive business paying one's way to and from the big city, stopping in costly hotels and paying high convention prices for food. So it was not strange that there grew up long ago the practice of helping out these delegates with their expenses, so long as they could be expected to vote right.

Practical politician that he was, even Abraham Lincoln engaged in this practice. Lincoln was considered something of an outsider among the contenders for the Republican nomination at the convention held in 1860 at Chicago.

For a party that had yet to win a presidential contest, the Republicans put on quite a show. They had their own new building, the Wigwam, in which to hold their convention and were promised that their proceedings would be reported quickly to the na-

tion by telegraph wires, installed for the first time in a convention hall.

But Lincoln was an old-fashioned fellow who understood that while these new-fangled ideas might be exciting, the way to win the nomination was to begin at the grass roots in assembling the largest number of delegate votes. It was with this in mind that Lincoln wrote a friend in Kansas in March 1860: "I now distinctly say this: If you shall be appointed a delegate to Chicago, I will furnish one hundred dollars to bear the expenses of the trip."

While I doubt it ever occurred to him he was following a Lincolnian precedent, my long-time friend Lew Wentz, Oklahoma Republican national committeeman, carried on the tradition in more modern times.

For a good many years the Republican party of Oklahoma depended to a large extent for its financial existence on Wentz and some of his colleagues who had made their money in oil. Big good-natured Lew was almost always for Taft and when Oklahoma Republicans were accommodating enough to furnish him with a Taft delegation to lead, Wentz was happy to pick up the tab for the group's convention expenses. When Taft was put out of the running, as he often was, the delegates naturally called on Wentz to name his second choice.

This is not to say that most of the delegates to any convention had been bought and paid for in advance. Wentz would have resented any such implication; these were merely people of the same opinion as he and he was delighted to be able to help finance their convention attendance.

While most of the delegates are honest people, interested primarily in obtaining a party nominee who can win in the general election, there is always among them a sprinkling of bankers with a financial stake involved, contractors hunting juicy federal plums, ambitious lawyers, and many officeholders, large and small, whose full-time business is politics.

By and large, governors are the most important men attending any convention, since they tend to control the vote of their state delegations. But as time has progressed, their power has been challenged, particularly in Democratic conventions, by the labor

leaders whose organizations reach into almost every state and are prepared to spend much larger sums to elect their favorites than the party organizations can muster in some of the industrialized areas.

Labor had no such overriding power in 1940's Republican convention; in fact it had almost none at all or Willkie could not have staged his coup.

By all the standards Willkie's was a late-starting and highly amateurish bid for the nomination. But it represented one of the few times businessmen had proved themselves intelligent enough to apply their mass-sales procedures to politics. It marked the beginning of a new era in the choice of Republican candidates with a huckstering type of operation that was effective in 1944 and 1948 and finally was crowned with presidential election success in 1952.

The story of 1940 was the same as the story of 1952—the Republican convention nominated a man it felt could win but not necessarily the man whom a majority of delegates would have chosen if GOP chances in November had been regarded as optimistic.

With what later came to be known as the "Madison Avenue technique," Willkie and his amateurs bowled over some better-than-average journeymen politicians, including Taft, Thomas E. Dewey of New York, and Senator Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan.

To the Republicans assembled in Philadelphia for their twenty-second convention, Willkie demonstrated that repetitive advertising and extravagant claims sell candidates as well as soap. To be sure, the Willkie brand of soap was of high caliber. He had a broad knowledge of world affairs shared by few of his businessmen colleagues. He had brains; he had guts; he was bold, imaginative, and, as is required at times of all successful men, he could be ruthless.

Willkie combined a boyish, blue-eyed frankness with a native interest in other human beings that made friends for him quickly. His grin was infectious, his frame husky, and his energy boundless. With all this he succeeded in looking the part of a solid, substantial American who might make a good President.

As a study in how presidential candidates are made, it is interesting to look back a short distance in Willkie's past. Long before 1940, he had taken deliberate steps to avoid as much as possible the appearance of the Wall Streeter and the utilities executive that he was. He had worked himself up to a \$75,000 a year job as president of Commonwealth & Southern Corporation, a public-utility firm which had traveled a rocky financial road until he took over.

New York was Willkie's home, but he found it good business, long before he thought of entering politics, to make himself look, as he expressed it, "like an Indiana farmer." To achieve that effect he wore rumpled, shiny suits with his tie often askew. He affected a mop of unruly, disheveled hair that flopped down his high forehead. His speech had the twang of his native Indiana. Willkie looked as little like a high-powered businessman as was possible and that was part of his common-man appeal.

By the established rules, Willkie had no business sticking his nose in a Republican convention. He had been a delegate to the 1928 Democratic National Convention and had supported Al Smith. He had been a Tammany Hall committeeman and had voted for Roosevelt in 1932.

Although Willkie had switched to support Governor Alfred M. Landon of Kansas, the 1936 Republican presidential nominee, he had neglected to change his registration from Democratic to Republican until 1938. As William Allen White, the Kansas editor, put it at the time of the 1940 convention, Willkie was "not dry behind the ears as a Republican."

Willkie had been much in the public prints in his battle with the government-established Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), arguing ably the case of private vs. public power. In this endeavor he had presented himself as a new type of utility executive who recognized that good public relations made it easier to make good private profits.

When he couldn't beat TVA, Willkie sold out Commonwealth & Southern's Tennessee holdings to the government agency for \$78,600,000. When I questioned them about this deal, two non-admirers praised Willkie's fairness. Senators Lister Hill and John

Sparkman of Alabama said after examining the deal minutely and critically they were satisfied Willkie had proved himself a square shooter in all of the involved negotiations.

The Willkie publicity—which eventually attracted the attention of the 1940 convention delegates—was good because the smart, affable, likable man behind it, Willkie himself, took personal pains to make it so.

Arriving in Washington one day for testimony before a senatorial committee investigating some phases of the TVA deal, Willkie had his publicity man compile a list of all of the Capitol reporters likely to be assigned to cover the hearing.

Instead of following the usual Washington custom of having a secretary invite these reporters to a cocktail party, Willkie picked up the phone himself.

"This is Wendell Willkie; you may have heard something about me," he said as I answered the phone. I conceded that I had and that I expected to report his testimony before the Senate committee the next day. In fact, I had heard a lot about Willkie, who was becoming a glamorous figure by this time, but I had never met him.

"Jack," he said breezily, "I'd like to have you have breakfast with me in the morning. I'd like to give you some background information on my testimony before the hearing starts."

Good-naturedly I told him that as an Associated Press reporter whose job it was to report the news in an unbiased manner, I'd rather hear his story from the witness stand and not across the coffee cup.

"I appreciate your position entirely," he replied quickly. "Of course, I had no intention of trying to influence your judgment and I hope you won't think that I did." From this small incident began a fast friendship that lasted until his untimely death.

It was beginning to be rather apparent at this time that Willkie was entertaining some political ambitions, no matter how remote their attainment then seemed.

Republican newspapers had begun writing laudatory editorials about this businessman who seemed to have a flair for public affairs, who offered a new face for the Republicans after two

shattering defeats at the hands of Roosevelt. General Hugh S. Johnson, "Old Ironpants," gave the ball a lusty shove by observing in his newspaper column in 1939 that Willkie would make "a very strong candidate" for the presidency.

Quick-witted Willkie, then immersed in the TVA negotiations, replied with a grin:

"If the government continues to take over my business, I may be looking shortly for some kind of a new job and General Johnson's is the best offer I have had so far."

There was more and more mention of Willkie as a possible candidate and by January 1940, he was saying that if the nomination were delivered to him without strings, he would have to accept it. "No man in middle life and good health could do otherwise," he said. However, if Willkie, then forty-eight, had any serious belief that he could win the nomination, it was not shared by many.

There were several earnest Republicans who were dedicating some rather vigorous efforts to the task of making it certain the nomination did not fall to an outsider like Willkie, or, for that matter, to anyone other than themselves.

Taft's supporters were following the well-marked and familiar trails in the South, bundling up delegates in the land where money talked. Dewey, then New York district attorney and only thirty-eight, had announced officially and had tub thumped the hustings with some success in the primaries. Vandenberg had Michigan's solid backing. There were other "favorite son" candidates such as Senators Styles Bridges of New Hampshire, Arthur Capper of Kansas, Charles McNary of Oregon, and Governor Arthur H. James of Pennsylvania. All in all, it appeared the old pros would control the convention—all they had to do was to agree among themselves.

From across the fence Harold L. Ickes, the then not-so-old curmudgeon, commented that Dewey "has finally thrown his diaper in the ring." Ickes said Willkie was "a simple barefoot Wall Street lawyer," an appellation later rounded out into the Democratic taunt: "Barefoot boy from Wall Street."

*Fortune*, a Henry Luce publication, gave Willkie a chance to

air his views on the prospective Republican platform in an article entitled "We the People." Oren Root, Jr., saw it, was impressed, and organized a Willkie-for-President Club in New York nine weeks before the convention was due to open. This seemed to be a puny effort in contrast with the four years of work that had been put in on behalf of some candidates, but Russell Davenport thought enough of Willkie's chances to resign as *Fortune*'s managing editor to devote full time to organizing a campaign for Willkie.

There was some raucous laughter among the old pros when Root advertised in the newspapers throughout the country for volunteers to form Willkie clubs. But the volunteers came in. And, more important, businessmen began talking to customers about Willkie; bankers mentioned his name to borrowers; lawyers discussed him with clients, and doctors spoke of him to patients. The business, professional, and moneyed men who made up the hate-Roosevelt segment of the population found this newcomer attractive.

About \$300,000 flowed out to inflate the Willkie boom, probably somewhat less than was spent to advance the prospects of Publisher Frank Gannett, who registered thirty-three votes on the first roll call. However, the old pros continued to view the Willkie operation as one that was strictly from hunger, something they could dispose of quickly once they got this upstart within the confines of a convention and opened up their bag of tricks.

There had been dark-horse candidates before but hardly any who rated with Willkie as a rank outsider. James Knox Polk was generally credited with being the first dark horse when he won the Democratic nomination in 1844 after Martin Van Buren got a convention majority but couldn't muster the two thirds then required for the nomination under party rules.

At that time, Polk was the same age as Willkie but there the resemblance ended. The drab, methodical Polk had spent twelve years in the House of Representatives and had been its Speaker for two years. He had been governor of Tennessee and had the important backing of Andrew Jackson as a prospective vice-presidential candidate. If he was a dark horse, he at least was politically well indoctrinated.

Handsome Franklin Pierce of New Hampshire came out of comparative obscurity to win the 1852 Democratic nomination on the forty-ninth ballot cast by weary delegates willing at that point to take anybody to end their deadlock. Unlike Willkie, Pierce had served two terms in the House of Representatives and nearly a full term in the Senate before he made his run.

Rutherford B. Hayes and James A. Garfield had made no pre-convention campaigns. William Jennings Bryan, who like Willkie never captured the presidency, stampeded a convention. Senator Warren G. Harding of Ohio had been chosen in a "smoke-filled room." But all of these had met a political payroll, had been elected to office by the voters, a goal Willkie never was to achieve.

Perhaps a bit of political legerdemain on the part of Roosevelt may have helped Willkie's chances. Just before the 1940 GOP convention opened, Roosevelt bowled over the Republicans by naming two outstanding members of their party to his Cabinet. He appointed Colonel Frank Knox, publisher of the Chicago *Daily News* and Landon's 1936 vice-presidential running mate, as Secretary of the Navy. He named Henry L. Stimson of New York, who had been Secretary of War for William Howard Taft and Secretary of State for Herbert Hoover, as Secretary of War.

To the Republicans, this was conclusive evidence—if they needed any more—that Roosevelt was going after a third term. The man they picked was going to have to have mass appeal to win. If they nominated an old guardsman after F.D.R. had taken two liberal Republicans into his administration, they stood to lose the independent vote in November. Willkie, who had been talking like a progressive and a liberal, benefited by this turn in psychology.

If the old pros believed they could hem Willkie in at the convention, they underrated the resourcefulness of the amateurs who arranged to pack the galleries with disciplined adherents, equipped with foghorn voices to chant for their candidate.

It wasn't a particularly new idea since supporters of Lincoln had jammed the galleries in the 1860 convention. While the rooters for Governor William H. Seward of New York were out staging a mammoth parade, Lincoln's men drifted into the Wig-

wam and filled every available seat except those reserved for the delegates. The Seward men arrived triumphant from their parade to find they had no place to sit.

The psychological impact of the crowd's vocal enthusiasm was effective in swaying the delegates to Lincoln's cause as his supporters kept the thunder of demands for his nomination going until he moved ahead on the third ballot. Before the count was over, one of the delegates gained the floor to announce the switch of four vital votes to Lincoln. An exuberant supporter waved a signal at another peering down through a skylight in the roof. Suddenly, a cannon mounted on the roof boomed the exultant note of Lincoln's victory.

Willkie's men had everything but the cannon, plus what Lincoln did not have, a wave of telegrams and phone calls calculated to strike wavering or uncommitted delegates at the right moment.

The Willkie claque came early to fill the convention-hall seats. There were angry charges that some of them had gotten into the galleries with counterfeit tickets but they were there and they sat tight, making the hall ring with their chant, dinning into the ears of the delegates seated on the convention floor the name of a man whom backers had extolled in hotel-room huddles and delegation caucuses as the "new face" the Republicans needed to win.

Dewey offered a "new face," too, but it was a painfully young one and set off with a brief mustache which always was to be something of a political liability. Small in stature and outwardly supercilious in manner, Dewey had little of the delegate appeal he manifested in 1944 and 1948.

As Paul Lockwood, one of Dewey's managers, was to concede later, the New Yorker's strategists fouled up their first attempt at convention maneuvering. When they shot the works on the first ballot and failed, we who toiled in the press section and fought our way through the milling mobs on the floor began to sense that perhaps this Willkie blitz would work after all. With no reserve of votes left to increase his total on the second ballot, Dewey had no place to go but down and out. And when he went down, Willkie's chances rose. Dewey summed it up neatly with the later

observation that "I led on three ballots, but they were the wrong ones."

Ohio's Taft, making the second of four unsuccessful bids for a presidential nomination, had the conservatives in his corner, with almost solid backing from the South. Vandenberg, the lone wolf, was in a strategic position, with support from Michigan and some other areas. Behind them trailed the long line of "favorite sons."

The old pros had sewed up to one or another of their candidates most of the "big names" of the party. Willkie's supporters, however, had been able to enlist the secret backing of Harold E. Stassen, the youthful Republican governor of Minnesota who looked at the time as if he might become one of the giants of the party. Stassen had professed his neutrality in the presidential contest when he was approached by party heads and offered the opportunity to keynote the convention as its temporary chairman.

The tall, handsome "boy wonder" governor raked the Roosevelt administration in his keynote address. Then, in one of the dramatic moves for which he later was to become noted, Stassen kicked tradition aside, marched down to where the Minnesota delegation was seated, parked his large frame in a front-row seat, hoisted a scoreboard on his lap, and went to work as Willkie's floor manager.

This was not the last time some Republican leaders were to complain that Stassen had sold them out. But Willkie had his home base, a bloc of Minnesota votes to form the core of the strength he later was to develop.

Willkie had come to town, set himself up in a hotel suite, and had joined unabashed in campaigning personally for the nomination.

One day while the preliminaries of the convention still were on, Willkie ran into former Senator James Watson of Indiana in a corridor. The fact that Watson was one of the most conservative of the old pros didn't keep Willkie from making a pitch for support from his native state.

"Jim," the candidate said, "couldn't you be for me?"

"No, Wendell," Watson replied, "you're just not my kind of Republican."

"I admit I used to be a Democrat," Willkie conceded.

"Used to be?" Watson fairly shouted.

"You're a good Methodist," Willkie continued doggedly, "don't you believe in conversion?"

"Yes, Wendell," the senator replied. "If a fancy woman truly repented and wanted to join my church, I'd welcome her. I would greet her personally and lead her up the aisle to a front pew. But, by the Eternal, I wouldn't ask her to lead the choir."

"Aw, Jim, you just go to hell," Willkie replied as he walked away.

If he was having trouble rounding up votes, Willkie still had the noise and this was a convention peculiarly affected by noise. Television was in its experimental infancy. Tired reporters could relax in the basement press rooms over a beer and view on TV the speakers' platform a floor above. But television had not come to the living room and the corner tavern. The people at home could hear the chants and the boos by radio. They could keep abreast of developments by word and picture in their newspapers. But they did not have the sense of sitting in on the show, of seeing it all happen. Noise, then, was the answer to the question of how to stir up the people, and the old pros became belatedly determined that the Willkie contingent would not outshout them.

When Taft's name was placed in nomination, well-organized pandemonium broke out. This demonstration was compounded out of traditional ingredients—a spontaneous initial outburst from admirers lasting a minute or two, then maintained for as long as possible by every artificial device available, including music, cheerleading, and the waving of banners by well-rewarded enthusiasts.

There is no record that any individual ever won a presidential nomination on the strength of having been applauded for ten minutes longer than his opponent. When one considers that few men, even if they are equipped to do so, are inclined to shout themselves hoarse for five minutes on end, the phoniness of such charades is apparent.

It took a great deal of gavel pounding by Representative Joseph W. Martin, Jr., jovial and quadrennial presiding officer at Repub-

lican conventions, to get a semblance of order restored. He no sooner had done this than the Taftites were in the aisles again, whooping it up once more.

As Martin pounded away in vain, courtly Colonel R. B. Creager of Texas made his way to the platform to display the scorn of the old pros for the upstart, Willkie, who was presuming to challenge them in what they regarded as their vested right to nominate the kind of a candidate they wanted.

Creager, who was generally credited in those days with totting the Republican party of Texas around in his hip pocket, held up his hand for quiet. Seeing his familiar figure at the speakers' microphone, the Taft paraders lapsed into silence.

"Let's give the other fellow a chance—not that it will amount to anything—but let's give him a chance," Creager shouted in his high-pitched voice. Laughing and exchanging sage grins with each other, the Taft rooters went back to their seats.

There followed a plethora of nominating and seconding speeches which afforded the opportunity for ambitious party members to share briefly in the limelight. It seemed to us in the press section that these were inordinately dull, as usual. In searching through the chaff for a few grains of wheat, it appeared that young Representative Charles Halleck of Indiana had come close to keynoting whatever appeal a public utility president might have for the convention when he said in nominating Willkie:

"It is better to have a public utility President than a President who has no public utility."

When the balloting began in the June 27 session Willkie was third man. Dewey had 360 votes, Taft 189, Willkie 105, and Vandenberg 76. Dewey had shot his wad and on the second ballot he slipped to 338. Taft went up to 203 and Willkie to 171. Vandenberg was down to 73. Of the 1000 votes, 501 were needed for the nomination.

The telegrams from home, the incessant Willkie chant from the galleries, the missionary work among the delegates by Stassen and his young and enthusiastic aides were beginning to be felt. Although it was still creaking at the axles, the bandwagon was beginning to move.

There comes a critical time in almost every convention when a strategic move can influence the results greatly. Either Dewey or Taft could have had the nomination at this point, but neither would yield his ambition to the other. If Vandenberg had broken for either of the two leaders, the Willkie grass fire might have been snuffed out. But Vandenberg hid out in a hotel room and declined to talk to representatives of any of the other candidates during a convention dinner recess.

When the delegates resumed their meeting and Willkie passed Taft on the third ballot, the infighting became bitter. Taft was not giving up and Nat U. Brown, heading the Washington state delegation, signaled this when he announced his state was casting sixteen votes, as it had before, "for a real Republican, Robert A. Taft."

Martin, who was not unfriendly to the Ohio senator's candidacy, brought his gavel crashing down. Pointing a finger at Brown, the stubby little chairman roared that characterizations of this kind were out of place.

"This is a Republican convention and all of the candidates before this body are Republicans," he declared. There was a great deal of evidence, however, that a substantial number of delegates regarded this as less than an official certification so far as Willkie was concerned.

When Willkie led with 306 votes on the fourth roll call, Vandenberg made his reluctant decision. The tall, massive-headed Michigan senator, who wrote his own speeches and did his own thinking, abandoned his hopes for the nomination.

There was between Vandenberg and Taft a mutual admiration, if something of a wariness for each other. Vandenberg's was the field of foreign policy, Taft's that of domestic matters. Where these encroached upon each other, each man avoided stepping on the other's toes.

This gentleman's agreement between two men of stature had brought the senators from Michigan and Ohio into a close working relationship. But neither presumed even to discuss with the other his own presidential ambitions.

There had been some hope in the Taft camp that when Van-

denberg decided to move, the ties of membership in the exclusive club of the Senate would prevail. But Vandenberg remained in character as the lone wolf. Without recommendations he withdrew and tossed the ball to the Michigan delegation.

Huddling quickly, the Michigan delegates decided to drop their choices for the nomination in a hat. When he had tallied them, Howard C. Lawrence, who had served as Vandenberg's campaign manager, fought his way through the crowded aisles to the platform to announce the results.

There was a tremendous roar as Lawrence ticked off the count: Willkie 34, Taft 2, Herbert Hoover 1. The old pros were through, and most of them knew it.

Unaware of what was going on, however, Pennsylvania's old pros were caucusing in an anteroom. They were so out of tune with the uprising going on under their noses they were arguing whether Governor James still had a dark-horse chance for the nomination. By the time the Pennsylvanians got back to the floor, the parade had passed them by. Willkie's nomination already had been bulletined to the world by the news services, although the official count was not completed. By then silver-haired Senator John Bricker of Ohio was on the way to the platform to throw in the towel for Taft. Frantically, David A. Reed signaled the chair and Martin put off Bricker for a moment so Pennsylvania's pros could now cast their unneeded votes for Willkie.

Thus it was that out of noise, audacity, and availability Willkie emerged as the dark-horse nominee in what columnist David Lawrence called "a triumph over politicians and political stratagems" and "a distinct achievement for the press and public opinion."

Willkie had been holding forth in the lobby of a downtown hotel, his ear glued to a small radio set that was giving the results of the balloting. He confided to reporters and the world at large that he had not seriously considered going after the nomination until May 11. It was then June 27. In those forty-seven days the years-long planning of veteran Republicans had been overturned and the nomination wrested from their grasp.

Having picked a rank outsider for its presidential nominee, the

convention characteristically turned back to the ranks of the professionals for his running mate, nominating Senator Charles L. McNary of Oregon for Vice-President.

The tall, thin, freckled McNary was a realistic politician who believed in wringing every possible benefit for his party out of any situation in which he found himself publicly involved. But he lived up to his own rule in the quiet conferences where the form of compromises was worked out with the dominant Democrats in Congress. His rule: "Never demagogue in a closed meeting."

McNary had told us reporters a week earlier that nobody ever was going to argue him into running for Vice-President. He also had confided to us his belief that no Republican could beat Roosevelt.

But Willkie had no such qualms. He had beaten the Republican old pros and now he was ready to take on the best of them all. Enthusiastically, Willkie challenged the Democrats to "bring on the champ."

## 8 Politics at the Brink



On a hot, dusty August day in Elwood, Indiana, Wendell Willkie took on "the champ" in what was to become a tumultuous, egg-splattered, hypercritical campaign the like of which may never again be equaled in America.

This campaign would be more than ordinarily significant in that it would culminate in Roosevelt's breach of the no-third-term tradition. Beyond that, however, it would represent at the brink of war a reckless, freewheeling exercise in irresponsibility unlikely to be paralleled in the future.

Not that there never again would be the kind of tumult that marked the 1940 political battle. Not that there never again would be an overage egg nor overripe tomato tossed in the general direction of a presidential candidate.

But never again could two candidates for the presidency close the eyes of the voters to the stark reality that major war anywhere in the world would involve the United States. In all probability there would be no time to debate the issue at all, since war would announce itself in the disintegrating dust of a half hundred cities, mushrooming into the skies.

But in 1940 there was time—not much—but time enough to argue and to promise. And Willkie was ready for both.

Handsome in his homely, square-faced, careless way, Willkie stood slumped and smiling before a multitude of 100,000 perspiring, fanning citizens gathered in Elwood to hear him formally accept the nomination he had wrested from a party he hardly could call his own. Some of them had come from a long distance to hear the words of the new messiah they hoped would lead them out of the wilderness of eight years of political despair.

But when it was all over, many of the faithful trudged away disappointed. For at this particular Sinai the prophet had no new words. For the opponents of Roosevelt there were only the

phrases of approbation for the Democratic administration's internationalist foreign policies. Domestically, Willkie called for an economy of productivity rather than scarcity. But he disillusioned the Republican old guard when he asked no repeal of the New Deal. On the whole, Willkie said merely, "Me-too, but I can do it better."

On that day in Elwood, Willkie was a restrained man, responsive to the requirements of statesmanship in a world gone awry. He realized he could argue about methods, but not objectives, in an era in which Hitler already had stood gloatingly at the tomb of Napoleon, in which Norway and the Low Countries were under the Fascist heel, and when the Luftwaffe was smashing at Britain.

But the unfortunate fact was that the reaction to this temperate speech was not pleasing to Willkie. Never hesitant about such matters, he asked reporters, commentators, and political associates how he had done. The consensus was that he had not done very well, that he had produced only a blurred image of opposition to Roosevelt. Willkie's response was to turn toward the tactics of slam-bang attack on F.D.R., a decision that was primarily responsible for the fireworks that followed.

Roosevelt had met the developing world conditions with a bold exercise of executive power in the transfer of fifty overage American destroyers to the British in exchange for 99-year leases on Western hemisphere bases. In this action, the evidence was overwhelming that Roosevelt consulted no one in Congress and acted even without the acquiescence of his attorney general, Robert H. Jackson.

Roosevelt asked and got congressional approval of a Selective Service act. He slapped an embargo on scrap iron and steel exports to Japan. He agreed with Prime Minister W. L. Mackenzie King of Canada to establish a permanent joint board for U.S.-Canadian defense. As quickly as he could, F.D.R. was shoring up the country's defenses for the inevitable involvement in war.

Willkie at first had approved the destroyer-base deal but on September 6—after he had digested the reaction to his acceptance speech—he called it "the most dictatorial and arbitrary action ever

taken by a President." The Republican candidate was floundering about, trying to find a solid basis for opposition to the man in the White House who was moving ahead swiftly, unconcerned with legalistic fly-specking criticism of his actions.

Hoping to nudge Roosevelt out from under the protective canopy of the White House, Willkie challenged the chief executive to a series of debates. Roosevelt did not even deign to reply. Instead, he let Harold L. Ickes give the derisive answer that "the battle of Britain could not be adjourned by Roosevelt to ride the circuit with Willkie."

These setbacks made Willkie even more determined to carry the fight to the President. Beginning at Coffeyville, Kansas, September 17, with an attack on the concentration of power in the hands of the executive, the Republican nominee gathered inspiration from the isolationist hinterlands.

In a voice already grown hoarse and gravelly, Willkie began to beat a systematic tattoo of criticism aimed at a President who daily grew more concerned with the noise his opponent was making.

Roosevelt had announced that he intended to busy himself at his business of running the country and would leave most of the political campaigning to Henry Wallace, his vice-presidential candidate. But the very vigor and irresponsibility of Willkie's charges eventually frightened Roosevelt into attempting to counter his opponent's contention that if the people returned the Republicans to power they could be assured of peace.

Roosevelt sometimes proved himself a political fraidy-cat and in this case he was just that. Perhaps it was one of the inconsistencies of greatness, but when he had the most to fear politically, Roosevelt was the most confident; when he had the least to fear, he was uneasy and he often vacillated.

Even in the face of all of the political distractions, however, the President had continued his efforts to convert the nation into the arsenal of democracy. But his bold, short-of-war moves had far less than unanimous acceptance. The country was of a divided opinion and the reports to the White House indicated that Willkie's constant attacks were becoming more and more effective.

It began to appear that nothing less than a direct answer from the No. 1 man on the Democratic ticket would suffice.

With characteristic deviousness Roosevelt arranged to set forth on a series of "inspection trips" to defense plants. In these the façade was maintained that a President, engaged in directing the affairs of the nation, was only seeing for himself that necessary steps had been taken to meet the Fascist military threat if it leaped the bounds of Europe.

If the defense plants just happened to be located in politically strategic areas and if the President just happened to have a little spare time to rub elbows with the voters in those areas, that, of course, could be attributed to mere coincidence.

This device infuriated Willkie, who was left in the position of boxing with a political shadow. If he felt it was not a sportsman-like way for the President to respond to his challenge, Willkie was merely learning tardily that there was little sportsmanship in politics.

Setting out on his series of visits, Roosevelt talked principally of the prospects of a peace which he, above all others, knew existed only momentarily.

As he went about the country, however, the adulation for Roosevelt, which had waned after his 1936 victory, began to manifest itself again. As they had before, the little people in the crowds surged forward to touch his person or to get a satisfactory look at him at close range. Here and there, as we passed through the crowd-packed streets, however, there was a face with hate for this man written plainly upon it.

Roosevelt loved the adulation of the crowds and responded radiantly to it. But he was not unaware of those white, hateful faces in the multitude. And this unpredictable fellow Willkie worried him.

The amphitheater of this campaign was charged for violence and Willkie did nothing to calm the feeling of the people as he went his wild way. In the big crowds which turned out to see and listen to him, cheers and boos were often about equally mixed. In a dozen cities the Republican nominee was the target for eggs,

tomatoes, and other handy missiles. Mrs. Willkie, who accompanied him, twice was splashed with eggs.

It was a disorganized and haphazard operation that Willkie headed in a special campaign train that carried him some 30,000 miles crisscrossing the land. But the political reporters who rode with this untamed candidate could sense that he was making a dent in the Roosevelt defenses. Political reporters, like sports writers, instinctively pick the champ to repeat, but at this point some of them were beginning to believe "the champ" could be taken.

Willkie was proving himself a veritable fountain of ideas. Where other presidential candidates had conserved their strength, had walled themselves off as much as possible from the press, and had husbanded every germ of an idea to unfold it dramatically in a speech, Willkie spewed out his thoughts like a slot machine which had just hit the jackpot.

Always on the go, the Republican candidate used up the time he might have spent resting by plowing his way through crowds in hotel lobbies. Like a cheerful, obliging collie, he stopped to talk with every reporter he encountered. For each he was likely to dish up a new thought and behind him he might leave a trail of a half dozen new "leads" for the day's story of his activities.

Willkie drove himself day and night until his voice was almost gone and he was so groggy he looked as if he might topple over at any minute. He never stopped talking, even when he could produce hardly more than a whisper, if there were people about to listen—and there always were.

The resulting mental fatigue sometimes left even a man of Willkie's powers in a daze. Wells (Ted) Church, who was arranging radio time for Willkie's speeches, told a favorite story of the night the candidate was to speak on the West Coast. Church bought radio time as far east as Denver, because Willkie had said he wanted as wide a coverage as possible on some remarks he was going to make on the labor issue.

When Willkie was informed there were no arrangements for coverage east of Denver, he was furious. He called Church back

to his private car at the end of the campaign train which was lurching westward at top speed.

"What is this I hear about your refusing to buy time in the East?" Willkie demanded.

Church replied wearily that since the speech was to be made at 9:30 P.M., Pacific standard time, he felt it would be of little value to beam it further east.

"Why not?" Willkie wanted to know.

"Mr. Willkie," Church replied, "there's three hours difference in time and, frankly, I don't think anybody's going to stay up in New York until after 12:30 to listen to anything you have to say."

"Oh," Willkie said lamely, "I forgot all about that. But say—what time would it be in Cleveland?"

When Church replied that Cleveland was on the same time as New York, Willkie gave up.

Even if he could admit that the voters weren't likely to stay up after midnight to listen to his ideas, Willkie nevertheless was responding to "crowditis." This is a compulsion that few presidential candidates have been able to rise above. The approving reaction of the crowd to a certain statement underlines that sentence in the speaker's mind. Almost unconsciously he comes to regard this as sure-fire stuff to be included in the next speech. The temptation arises to juice up the sentence to make it even more appealing. By this process of enlargement many candidates have found themselves taking the responsibility in late October for utterances they would never have thought of delivering in September.

Willkie's curve toward the isolationist viewpoint, of course, was perceptible to the reporters who traveled with him and whose job it was to winnow out each new angle that cropped up in his remarks. As he probed deeper and deeper into the receptive Middle West, Willkie became more and more convinced that the principal concern of the American voters was to avoid war—at almost any cost.

In this connection he felt he was making headway in his flailing attacks on Roosevelt's use of "dictatorial" powers and it was natural that as the campaign went on he should step up these assaults. Although he had been charging that Roosevelt had so

neglected the country's defenses it had no means with which to fight, Willkie had no qualms in turning squarely about to contend that F.D.R. was planning to send American troops abroad immediately if he won the election. When this got the kind of reaction he was looking for, Willkie went even further. Citing Roosevelt's unkept 1932 pledge to balance the budget, the Republican candidate asked campaign crowds whether his opponent's "pledge for peace is going to last longer than his pledge for sound money."

"On the basis of his past performance with pledges to the people," Willkie shouted at his listeners, "you may expect we will be at war by April 1941, if he is elected." He added that this would be likely to result in "plowing under every fourth American boy."

These were stinging phrases from a man who was well enough informed to know that, no matter who was elected, the country was drifting relentlessly toward war. Roosevelt, who was even better informed, chose also to deny the inevitable.

It required no effort for him to dispose of the sound-money charge. Concerning the budget, which he had failed to balance, F.D.R. was in old-time form when he replied that he was "unwilling that economy should be practiced at the expense of starving people."

But the war-by-April charge held some politically frightening possibilities; it might even cost the President the election. So Roosevelt felt constrained to offer a promise, good for face value until the election but discountable thereafter. In Boston he told a cheering audience:

"I have said this before and I shall say it again and again and again: Your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign war."

Roosevelt had rejected a proposal by his speech writers to attach the phrase, "unless we are attacked," and there the matter rested so far as he was concerned.

The old maestro was in good form. He knew the value of a slogan turned against an opponent in the campaign. What "Rum, Romanism and Rebellion" had done to Blaine, Roosevelt contrived to have happen to Willkie through the mere recital of the names of some of the latter's supporters.

When F.D.R. rolled out in derisive syllables the names of "Martin, Barton and Fish," the country knew he was pinning an Old Guard-Wall Street-isolationist tag on Willkie in one breath. The individuals involved were Joseph W. Martin, Jr., then GOP House leader; Bruce Barton, big business advertising man turned congressman, and Representative Hamilton Fish of New York, the most vocal of the isolationists. Even Willkie admitted privately the three characterized what he called "isolationist voices" in his party. He said at one point, "I knew when the President could hang that on me and get away with it, I was licked."

Willkie had attempted at first to maintain a flirtation with the isolationists while still trying to hang on to the support of the party's internationalists. Gradually, however, he was turning more and more toward the no-war members of his party. Recognizing his opponent's dilemma, Roosevelt took occasion in Brooklyn a few days before the election to fry the Willkie bacon crisp.

"We all know the story of the chameleon which turned brown when placed on a brown rug and turned red when they placed him on a red rug, but who died a tragic death when they placed him on Scotch plaid," Roosevelt said. Willkie was indeed squirming on the Scotch plaid.

But Roosevelt was not having everything his own way. Just a week before the election President John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers (UMW) came out against Roosevelt's re-election. A few years before, the UMW had loaned the Democrats a half million dollars when they were hard up. Lewis had had things pretty much his own way during the New Deal but he nevertheless plumped for Willkie.

Contending that Roosevelt was moving toward a dictatorship, Lewis said he would resign his CIO leadership post if Roosevelt won. Eventually he broke with the CIO but there was no evidence this action had any real connection with Roosevelt's re-election.

Down to the wire Willkie carried his fight, proclaiming that he was better equipped than Roosevelt to keep American boys busy running a tractor instead of a tank. Roosevelt limited his replies but they were more effective than any charges that Willkie could produce in more than 500 campaign talks that reached an esti-

mated thirteen million people. Millions who never saw Willkie read of his views and exploits in the newspapers or heard his husky, pleading voice on the radio.

In about seven weeks of active campaigning, Willkie turned and twisted away from his original staunch support of aid to the Allies until he arrived at the unbelieved pledge that somehow, if he were elected, there would be no war for America.

The millions who read and heard Roosevelt's "again and again and again" commitment may have considered it no more sincere. But as between two men who were shadowboxing with destiny, a majority of the voters chose "the champ."

So it was that by a margin of 27,243,466 to 22,304,755 popular votes and 449 to 82 electoral votes that the tradition against the third term was broken 144 years after Washington had established it. There would be a fourth term—and perhaps there would have been a fifth if death had not intervened.

As fateful 1941 dawned, Roosevelt led the country in giant steps toward preparations for the war that would overshadow all else in the third term, expand again the presidential powers, and carry the incumbent into a fourth successful election. Having set up the Office of Defense Production in December of 1940, Roosevelt recommended Lend-Lease to Congress in January, when he enunciated the "Four Freedoms"—freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear.

Just as Lincoln had encountered dissenters in Congress, so Roosevelt stirred violent opposition with his proposals, with the chief resistance coming from men who had once carried the banner of progressivism high. One of these was Senator Burton K. Wheeler, lanky, cigar-chewing Montana Democrat who had been the elder LaFollette's vice-presidential running mate on the 1924 Progressive ticket. Another was Senator Gerald P. Nye, a fighting Republican rooster from North Dakota.

In the battle for public opinion, Wheeler called the Lend-Lease proposal "a New Deal AAA program, ploughing under every fourth American boy." Nye was equally as bitter and Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh, whose solo flight across the Atlantic hardly seemed to qualify him as an expert on foreign policy, testified

that the proposal involved "a step away from Democracy." Lindbergh added that it was "one step closer to war—I don't know how many steps we can take and still be short of war."

Congressional opponents called on the eminent historian, Dr. Charles A. Beard, who accurately diagnosed the Roosevelt measure as "a bill waging undeclared war." But the country would not listen to protests; Roosevelt was on the move and a substantial majority of the people were behind him.

By early March Roosevelt had his Lend-Lease bill and by mid-April he named Harry Hopkins, who had been conditioned in the New Deal's domestic giveaways, to direct the flow of war materials to the Allies. Characteristically, Roosevelt chose this moment of personal victory over his critics to loose some of the venom he had stored up against them. Picking primarily on Lindbergh, Roosevelt compared him and other critics to the Copperheads of the Civil War. Unable to answer a President in kind, Lindbergh resigned his reserve air corps commission.

At least three months before, the shine of British brass had shown up in Washington. High British officers turned up at discreet cocktail parties that were given by the capital's Anglophiles. Even under the influence of several scotches and sodas—"no ice, please"—the Britishers scarcely unbent from a God-Save-the-King attitude from which they peered down at the Americans who hadn't yet risen to fight with them.

They kept their secret well, however, and it was not until much later that it was disclosed American-British staff talks had produced an agreement by which Germany would be the prime target for retaliation if the United States and Britain should find themselves in a war with Germany and Japan. Roosevelt was moving even faster than it appeared on the surface.

In a corollary of the Washington staff talks, American, British, and Dutch military leaders got together in Singapore in April, eight months before the Pearl Harbor disaster, to plan combined strategy if Japan attacked the United States.

If Roosevelt's critics in Congress had known what he was up to, there would have been billy-hell to pay. Some of them were to say, as General Albert C. Wedemeyer was to write later, that

F.D.R. "deliberately provoked" the Japanese into attacking. Perhaps the Japanese had their provocations, but I reported an exhaustive congressional investigation that failed to produce a scintilla of proof Roosevelt ever dreamed the "day of infamy" would arrive at Pearl Harbor on the drowsy Sunday of December 7, 1941.

Although it had voted the President sweeping powers, Congress had sought to hedge the chief executive in with requirements that he must proclaim certain types of emergencies in order to put these powers to use. Roosevelt pushed many of these barriers aside in March by proclaiming an unlimited national emergency, an action that had the effect of giving him almost dictatorial authority.

In June he ordered German and Italian consulates in the United States closed. He promised Lend-Lease aid to Russia, which had been attacked by Hitler. Two days after the Japanese invaded Indochina in July, Roosevelt froze all Nipponese credits in this country, bringing trade with Japan to an abrupt halt. On July 26, he nationalized the armed forces of the Philippines and appointed General Douglas MacArthur as commander-in-chief in the Far East. Inexorably the country was moving toward war, guided by the hand of a strong President.

Roosevelt chose this period to go off on a sea vacation. We in the press corps knew how he loved the sea and we had seen it many times revive his lagging health. Still, at this critical period, there was a phony smell about the White House announcements that the President was sailing on the cruiser *Augusta* for a rest.

Our hunches were confirmed when we learned that the President had traveled to a meeting with Winston Churchill. Aboard the British battleship *Prince of Wales*, Churchill steamed to Argentia Bay, off Newfoundland, to confer personally with F.D.R. Out of this meeting came the Atlantic Charter, with its high resolves and its provisions that remained hardly any more practical of attainment than when Woodrow Wilson had enunciated many of them in his Fourteen Points.

Back in Washington, Roosevelt won another close battle with Congress. The House of Representatives, torn between its desire

for peace and the necessity to prepare for war, passed by a 203 to 202 vote a bill to extend the service of army draftees by eighteen months. After favorable Senate action, Roosevelt signed it on August 18.

Events moved swiftly. Within a month, after a German submarine had attacked a U.S. destroyer, Roosevelt ordered the navy to "shoot on sight" at an enemy he did not define. By then the navy was convoying supplies as far as Iceland, and F.D.R. asked for modification of the Neutrality Act to permit the arming of merchant vessels. In quick succession, a U.S. destroyer was torpedoed west of Iceland and another was sunk by a German sub with the loss of 100 American lives. The early days of 1917 were being lived over again.

In this period Roosevelt was proposing secretly that the United States and Great Britain pool their activities to develop the atomic bomb. In the fall of 1939 scientist Albert Einstein had written the President saying that nuclear fission seemed possible. F.D.R. had appointed a committee on uranium and had directed it to look into the military possibilities.

Roosevelt had no intention of consulting Congress in advance about the development of the bomb and he kept most of his own Cabinet members in the dark about his plans, lest there be a news "leak." However, while he had enormous powers at his command, this was a tremendous undertaking and there was nowhere else to get the money to finance it but from Congress.

When the time came to act, Roosevelt dispatched General George C. Marshall, then Army Chief of Staff, to Capitol Hill for secret appearances before the House and Senate Appropriations Committees. Marshall, tall, gray-haired, militarily erect, and stiffly proper, stunned the committees when he told them, in effect:

"Gentlemen, I am asking you to appropriate two billion dollars, to be disbursed by the President, for a very secret project about which I can tell you nothing. All of the money may go down the drain. That is all I can say."

The committees approved and Congress voted the money without question. Thus was opened the doorway to the world's most horrible form of destruction.

The Japanese strike at Pearl Harbor signaled a fresh burst of presidential activity. With his favorite scepter of power, the executive order, Roosevelt set up the Office of Censorship and boards to control transportation, shipping, housing, alien property, and war information. A carefully documented and properly supported dictatorship had begun to take control of the American people's destinies.

Roosevelt was not one to await or to heed any challenge to his authority. He had no hesitancy, for instance, in employing the executive power to tear 112,000 Japanese-Americans from their homes and farms on the Pacific Coast and to move them to "relocation centers." That Congress meekly ratified this order a month later did not gainsay the fact that if Roosevelt had chosen to do so, he might have consigned all red-haired residents of the Atlantic Coast to similar camps. The fact that he would never have thought of such action explained the difference between what might be called a "democratic dictatorship" and its alien counterpart which lay, in Roosevelt's time as in Lincoln's, in the accountability of the chief executive to the people through impeachment or rejection at the polls.

Roosevelt had the people with him and that fact emboldened him to dictate to Congress the kind of legislation he wanted passed. When the lawmakers dallied in debate over wartime price and wage controls, the President said that if they didn't act, he would. He fired a blunt message to Capitol Hill on September 7, 1942, in which he declared:

"The President has the power, under the Constitution and Congressional acts, to take measures necessary to avert a disaster which would interfere with the winning of the war. . . .

"The American people can be sure that I will use my powers with a full sense of my responsibility to the Constitution and to my country. The American people can also be sure that I shall not hesitate to use every power vested in me to accomplish the defeat of our enemies in any part of the world. . . ."

By inference the President would determine the scope of powers vested in him. He would act decisively when he chose to do so; if the courts disagreed, it would be after the fact.

The executive power worked effectively. When Lewis called a strike of the mine workers, Roosevelt ordered the coal mines seized and Lewis called off the walkout the following day. When a strike threatened to halt rail traffic late in 1943, the President ordered the army to take over the railroads and a settlement was forthcoming three weeks later.

In an unprecedented extension of the government's power over individuals, Roosevelt decreed a 48-hour work week in labor-shortage areas and froze twenty-seven million war-plant workers in their jobs. With his eye on 1944, however, he saw to it that those who worked the extra hours in war industries got time-and-a-half pay for their patriotism.

Although politics was subdued, Roosevelt never lost sight of what he regarded as the necessity of running for a fourth term. He gave us one of the few hearty laughs we enjoyed at White House press conferences in those gloomy days when he announced on December 29, 1943, that he was abandoning the term "New Deal" to designate his policies. The New Deal had been dead so long most of us had quit using the label. And we were considerably less than charmed by his new slogan of "Dr. Win-the-War."

At this time almost everybody knew Roosevelt would run again and almost everybody felt it made little difference who the Republicans nominated. It might have been Willkie, except for his disasters in the spring primaries. It turned out, however, that one of Willkie's 1940 victims, Governor Thomas E. Dewey of New York, now was to be Roosevelt's fourth victim.

The only excitement generated at the Democratic convention that year came from Roosevelt's undecisiveness about his running mate. A little fed up with Wallace and his praise of Russia, Roosevelt said that while he preferred renomination of his Vice-President he would be happy to have someone else.

National Chairman Robert E. Hannegan came up with a letter from F.D.R. voicing approval of Senator Harry S. Truman of Missouri or Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas for second place on the ticket. With the help of the South, Truman won the prize.

As they had been in 1864, the people were unwilling in the

wartime election to drop their pilot. It did not seem to matter that a bone-tired, aging, and ill man was seeking a fourth term. They wanted him and would have none other. So it was Roosevelt again until the fateful day of April 12, 1945, when death stepped in to end the dynasty.

## 9 The Terrible Burden



"I don't know if any of you fellows ever had a load of hay or a bull fall on him, but last night the whole weight of the moon and the stars fell on me. I feel a tremendous responsibility. Please pray for me. I mean that."

The little round man spoke plaintively, his bulldog jaw quivering a bit and his blue eyes blinking owlishly behind thick-lensed glasses.

Harry S. Truman stood uneasily in the reception room of the office of the Secretary of the United States Senate, surrounded by reporters who had been used to greeting him familiarly as "Harry." But there was a difference now—a new restraint—for overnight our friend the Vice-President had become President of the United States and even for case-hardened reporters there remained an awe and respect for that office accorded no other.

It was difficult, unnatural to address this man as "Mr. President," so we skirted around the edges by prefacing our questions with the word "Sir" or by not using any form of address at all. In time we would get used to calling him "Mr. President," as, in time, he himself would get used to being President.

The day before, the moon and stars, indeed, had fallen on an almost totally unprepared Harry Truman when Franklin D. Roosevelt had died. To us reporters who knew the saddened new President and his limitations well, it seemed inconceivable that Truman now was to fill F.D.R.'s shoes. We were to learn, however, that the presidency may be served with distinction by a determined plodder, as well as by a genius.

On the fateful day of April 12, 1945, when Roosevelt died, Truman had been leading a placid life as Vice-President. Roosevelt was running the war; the Senate was running itself, and there really wasn't much for Truman to do.

The Vice-President had been invited to sit in with the Cabinet

but when Roosevelt had something important at hand he was inclined to skip Cabinet discussion of the project and to talk only with his intimates. Truman had been offered no executive responsibilities and no matter how he tried, he remained something of a fifth wheel.

Along about five o'clock on the afternoon of April 12, Truman had wandered across the Capitol to Speaker Sam Rayburn's "board of education," around the corner from the House of Representatives chamber. Over a convivial glass, there was politics to be talked, with the possibility that the Vice-President might learn at second hand something about what was going on behind the facade of government.

When he arrived, Truman found a message awaiting him from Steve Early, the President's press secretary. Truman was wanted at the White House on a matter of urgent importance. Truman said later he thought perhaps F.D.R. had flown back unexpectedly from Warm Springs and might wish to see him about some matter the President proposed to lay before Congress.

With characteristic impishness, Truman chose this occasion to test out his theory that, if he put his mind to it, he could evade the ever-present Secret Service men who followed him about. Truman had never liked the idea, but the Secret Service—perhaps more aware of Roosevelt's condition than its officials cared to admit—had insisted that the Vice-President be guarded.

Jumping in an elevator, Truman descended to the basement of the Capitol and wound his way through a labyrinth of seldom-used passages on that floor that led to the Senate wing. There he claimed his waiting car and sped off triumphantly for the White House without a Secret Service man in sight.

On Truman's arrival he was greeted at the door by Mrs. Roosevelt, who said, simply and calmly: "The President is dead."

Almost unbelievably, Truman asked Mrs. Roosevelt:

"Is there anything I can do for you?"

"Is there anything we can do for you?" she replied, "for you are the one in trouble now."

Less than two hours later Truman stood beneath a portrait of

Woodrow Wilson in the Cabinet room and took the oath of office as President, administered by Chief Justice Harlan F. Stone.

The terrible burden of the presidency had descended on Truman. And because the Founding Fathers had created the vice-presidency as an afterthought and had clothed it with no preparatory duties, he was not ready for the load he must struggle to carry. Because the man who preceded him was a do-it-yourself President, Truman was thrust into the captaincy of a ship with no knowledge of its course or its bearings.

As Truman himself said, "It is a mighty leap from the vice-presidency to the presidency if one is forced to make it without warning."

This inexperienced helmsman was grasping the wheel when the European war was going well but was not over and when prospects pointed toward a long and gory battle with Japan. It was significant that when he became President, Truman knew nothing about the tremendous efforts then under way to develop an explosive that might destroy the world.

There were mammoth problems confronting the new chief executive. The United Nations was about to be born. If peace could be won, reconversion of industry seemed certain then to lead to strikes and economic depression. Price controls and rationing were galling the electorate and overextended agriculture seemed headed toward collapse.

It was not surprising that after a few hours at the desk from which F.D.R.'s trinkets had not yet been cleared, Truman fled to the familiar surroundings of the Capitol's Senate wing. There with his Senate cronies he could shake off, at least for a little while, the great loneliness of a presidency suddenly pressed upon him.

As he stood outside the Secretary's office and chatted nervously with us, we reporters knew that Harry Truman was scared. He was awed by the responsibilities of the office that Thomas Jefferson had described as "a splendid misery." Truman himself was to assess those responsibilities as "without parallel" on this earth.

In carrying out these responsibilities, Truman was to find that a President must fill a dozen jobs, each of which would be a full-time task for almost any healthy, vigorous man. A President who

was ill must delegate many of his powers, compromise with necessity, as we shall see later. The healthiest of Presidents could not do full justice to the manifold responsibilities that closed in upon him.

Even Roosevelt, whose relish for the presidency was equaled only by that of his forebear, T.R., recognized that the office had grown too large for a single man to fill adequately.

In 1937, when he asked for authority to reorganize the executive agencies, Roosevelt told Congress it had been "common knowledge for twenty years that a president cannot adequately handle his responsibilities; that he is overworked; that it is humanly impossible, under the system which we have, for him fully to carry out his Constitutional duty as Chief Executive, because he is overwhelmed with minor details and needless contacts arising directly from the bad organization and equipment of the government."

Some of the reporters who probed into congressional reaction to this statement came up with the reply from F.D.R.'s critics that if there was bad organization, Roosevelt and his haphazard methods must share the blame.

In the early days of the New Deal he and his "Brains Trust" had concocted new government agencies almost faster than Congress could grind out the authorizations for them. Once in being, these agencies made expansion one of their principal aims and when war came, government really grew out of its pants.

In the beginning of the republic it had been a relatively simple matter for George Washington to supervise the nine executive establishments that had about 1000 employees. This part of the presidency then was so undemanding that Jefferson had managed to spend 796 days away from the seat of government in his two terms.

But Roosevelt had left Truman a legacy of 1900 sprawling government agencies, employing 3,786,000 persons, of whom about 500 were under the President's personal command in the White House and its allied bureaus. Never noted for his administrative ability, Roosevelt had made no really effective efforts to co-ordinate the work of the bureaus he had piled on top of each other.

Dr. Louis Brownlow, who served F.D.R. as a reorganization ex-

pert, related with amusement how Roosevelt, in one of his attempts to bring order out of the chaos, set up an emergency council of agency heads to meet with the Cabinet on Fridays. The result appalled even the President.

"Every time I come to the Friday meetings and meet the heads of all the agencies," Roosevelt told Brownlow, "I feel like I am addressing a town meeting in New England or a camp meeting in Georgia."

The presidency had become big business since 1857 when Congress first made funds available to the chief executive to hire a private secretary, a White House steward, and a messenger. It had grown like Topsy since Theodore Roosevelt had been able to run his job with a White House staff of forty after the turn of the century.

As late as 1921, easygoing, plug-chewing Warren G. Harding had confided delightedly to friends that he could go to press with his White House chores by three-thirty o'clock in the afternoon, the time he had been accustomed to putting his Marion, Ohio, newspaper to bed.

Harding complained, however, about having to get up early to sign documents. He said he had to get to his office by eight o'clock in the morning to dispose of all the papers laid before him for his signature. His troubles were minor compared to those of William McKinley.

In McKinley's day the law required that all commissions for presidential appointments be issued on sheepskin. There was no means of blotting the signature ink on the sheepskin so on days when a large number of commissions accumulated, all presidential business stopped and all traffic through McKinley's office had to be halted while the sheepskins were spread out over all of the available furniture and floor space to dry.

Grover Cleveland had been able to answer most of his mail in his own longhand and it was not until Herbert Hoover came along that Congress grudgingly agreed to give the President three secretaries instead of one.

At Roosevelt's urging, Congress created the Executive Office of the President in 1939, providing F.D.R. with an additional six as-

sistants who were supposed to preserve "a passion for anonymity." The Budget Bureau was transferred from the Treasury to the White House organization. By subsequent acts the Council of Economic Advisers, the National Security Council, and the Office of Defense Mobilization also were attached to the White House setup.

While all of this was done in the name of efficiency, the pyramiding organization seemed to increase, rather than diminish, the staggering load of what Truman once described as "an executive job that is almost fantastic"—a view General Eisenhower was to share.

Several years later Eisenhower was to say that being Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Europe hadn't taxed him nearly as much as being President. He tabbed the presidency as "the most wearing job" he ever had.

There was a strong suspicion among the White House newsmen, however, that the weight of the burden of the presidency depended as much on the particular chief executive's idea of how to run his job as it did on any outside factors.

Roosevelt, for instance, could chop his way through the kind of underbrush that would have snared Hoover in frustrating details. Whatever he did, Roosevelt wanted to do it in a big way and he had no patience with small matters. If other men were confused about his methods—and often his objectives—Roosevelt was apt to be delighted to have it that way. He had a small boy's glee in being mysterious and devious.

Moreover, Roosevelt had supreme confidence in his ability to handle any situation that might arise in war or peace, at home or abroad. A brain picker who liked to surround himself with men of ideas, he plucked these ideas and almost unfailingly clothed them with a touch of grandeur of his own.

But he was an individualist in action and his procedures were not conducive to training any other to take over the responsibilities it never seemed to occur to him he might have to lay down one day. He had engineered Truman's nomination but if he gave any thought to the possibility that the Vice-President would be

his successor, Roosevelt never turned over the buffalo nickel of the presidency for Truman to see the other side.

If Harry Truman was unequipped, scared, and awed by the obligations of the presidency he was inheriting, he nevertheless was gritty, dogged, and determined to be the best chief executive he knew how to be. As he said years later, Truman felt at the time there were a million men better qualified than he to be President but the work was his to do and he was going to give it everything in him.

Truman had always been a modest, folksy, warmhearted individual with no outward signs of the drive he developed as the White House occupant. A poor speaker, with jerky gestures and a Missouri-flattened nasal voice, he never had been one of those who filled the Senate pews when he addressed that body. The war investigations which had pushed his name to the front pages had left him just another senator in the eyes of most of his colleagues.

Truman had been tabbed as minimally liberal, with a family background of support for the Confederacy which endeared him to his southern colleagues. They later were to turn upon him as a traitor to the clan when he did what Roosevelt always managed to avoid by recommending congressional action on civil rights.

The new President's executive experience consisted of two interrupted terms served as judge of the Jackson County (Missouri) Court, beginning in 1922. This was a supervisory, rather than a judicial, position. From this he had been picked up by the Pendergast machine, which controlled Kansas City and tipped the balance of political power in the state, as its Senate candidate in 1934.

There never was any suggestion that Truman was tainted with the kind of cash-and-carry politics Tom Pendergast played. Yet when Pendergast was indicted for income-tax evasion in 1939 and pleaded guilty, Truman displayed toward the toppled political boss the same sort of loyalty to unworthy friends that was to plague him as President and was to set the Republicans talking in the 1952 campaign about "corruption" in his administration.

Under Truman the operation of the presidency became a hard, grubbing process. Lacking the inspirational genius of a Roosevelt,

the new chief executive applied himself diligently to learning all of the details of his job, drawing from an ample reserve of common sense in the decisions he was called upon to make.

In this period Truman was inordinately humble, a quality that was at least refreshing to Americans who had grown a little tired of the imperiousness of F.D.R. and who could welcome a President who did not profess to be all-wise on every subject but was willing and eager to learn.

Of course it did not last. It seldom did because the presidency is not so constituted as to permit the man who occupies it long to retain any genuine humility. That Truman subsequently became unbecomingly cocky was a source of dismay to some of his friends and of unresentful amusement to the country.

When he reported later on the job he had done and how he had done it, Truman nearly always exaggerated. In his statement that he usually worked seventeen hours a day, for instance, he obviously was counting every waking hour as a working hour. On some rare days this might have been true. However, there were relaxing weekends on the presidential yacht *Mayflower* when some of the reporters who matched their poker ability against Truman's had to call on their offices for extra expense allowances.

At the time he entered the White House, Truman's acquaintanceship with the executive officials was limited to the contacts he had made with them as a senator. One of the high points of his life had been reached when he captained a field artillery battery in World War I. Out of his experiences came a tremendous respect for military men of the stature of General Marshall, upon whom he was to lean heavily during his administration.

Truman had almost no use for the members of Roosevelt's Cabinet and soon they were separating themselves from his administration. Curiously, one of the last to go was Henry Wallace, whose political love affair with the pinkos was to cost Truman the electoral vote of New York State in the 1948 election. Eventually, Truman forced Wallace to walk the plank when the latter crossed James F. Byrnes on foreign policy.

Truman's relations with Byrnes illustrated graphically the extent to which the new President depended at first upon a relatively

small coterie of friends. Truman had known Jimmie Byrnes well in the Senate and had built up a great deal of admiration for the effectiveness of the friendly eyed, balding little South Carolinian with the infectious laugh. Byrnes had been a member of the House of Representatives, a senator, a Supreme Court Justice, and finally, at F.D.R.'s request, had resigned from the court to become "assistant President."

No one was especially surprised, therefore, when Byrnes showed up at the White House shortly after Truman had become President. When Byrnes emerged from a conference with the chief executive, he wasn't talking to newsmen. But in response to a furtive wink, I trailed him to his auto and, at his invitation, rode away with him.

"Jimmie," I said when we were seated in the car, "what's this all about? What job have you been offered and is it one that you will take?"

"Harry has asked me to become Secretary of State," Byrnes replied. "He wants Stettinius to continue through the United Nations organization conference in San Francisco but immediately after that I'll take over."

Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., tall, white-haired, and outwardly impressive, had been brought into the government by Roosevelt. When the fair-haired boy of United States Steel had been named Secretary of State we wiseacre newspapermen wrote that F.D.R. was confirming all we had been saying—that he was his own Secretary of State as well as his own everything else that mattered in the government.

In the Senate Byrnes had been the teacher and Truman the pupil. Byrnes apparently expected this relationship to continue and there was a period in which the foreign-policy decisions he communicated to the President were accepted readily. But it was not in the cards for any chief executive with Truman's spunk to restrain himself long in such a relationship.

Although he gave no indication of it then, this resentment obviously was growing at the time when Byrnes—frightened by the findings of navy doctors that he had a heart condition—secretly submitted his resignation. It was to become effective after he had

completed treaty negotiations then under way. Strangely, the same doctors found a year later they had been mistaken in their diagnosis but by then the resignation had taken effect.

In the bitter disagreement that flared between the two old friends the weight of evidence rests on the side of Byrnes's contention that Truman became angry with him because of a speech Byrnes made at Washington and Lee University, long after he had left office as Secretary of State. Byrnes had inveighed against "socialism" and Truman took this as an attack on his domestic policies.

With Truman there were no halfway measures. You either were all out for a man or all out against him, as he illustrated strikingly in the parallel stories of his relations with Byrnes and with Eisenhower.

In his first six months in office, while he was grinding the grist of a presidential mill without full knowledge of the ingredients he was using, Truman had been snatched up in the tide of momentous events.

This six-month period encompassed the surrender of Germany, the organization of the United Nations, the Potsdam Conference with Stalin, Churchill, and then Attlee, an ultimatum to Japan, the decision to drop the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Russia's declaration of war on Japan, Japan's surrender, the reconversion of industry with its strikes, swift demobilization of the armed forces, Cabinet changes, and the beginning of bitter wrangles with Congress.

In this period Truman leaned heavily on the failing Harry Hopkins. He turned to General Marshall for civilian, as well as military, advice. He maintained cordial relations with General Eisenhower. He managed to worry along with General Douglas MacArthur, whom he later was to fire. He began lining up old Missouri friends like John Snyder to help him run the government.

Truman was kind to his cronies. Moon-faced John Maragon, once a Kansas City bootblack who later became involved in the influence-peddling scandals and served a prison sentence, sported a gold card which admitted him to the White House. Slim and sardonic Matt Connelly, later to be convicted of income-tax eva-

sion in another influence case, served as Truman's appointment secretary. The mink coat and freezer episodes were around a not-too-distant corner. There were some bad odors wafted from the administration but the man who worked at the White House was too busy on world-shaking decisions to notice them.

The pace was hectic, but the work was rewarding and Truman began to enjoy himself doing what he told a gathering of fellow Masons was "an all-day and nearly all-night job."

He added with a grin: "Just between you and me and the gate-post, I like it."

Truman was reaching the point at which Theodore Roosevelt had arrived when he wrote William Jennings Bryan in 1908 as retirement was rushing toward him:

"When you see me quoted in the press as welcoming the rest I will have . . . take no stock in it. I will confess to you that I like my job. The burdens . . . will be laid aside with a great deal of regret."

At the time Truman was operating the presidency on a personalized basis. He felt he must know personally all of the details of any of the problems which arose. He had no confidence in the staff system in which his successor would place great faith.

Clark Clifford, tall, curly-haired legal counsel and right-hand man for Truman, said his boss "felt that he did better and he maintained a more personal knowledge and contact with a problem if he was able to talk personally with the man to whom he assigned the problem."

"He did not use the staff system," Clifford continued. "If he had ten or twelve men working for him on the White House staff he found he did better if he talked with those men personally, with reference to their reactions to a particular problem, rather than having them produce their reports and referring them to a chief of staff who, in turn, would digest them and pass them on to the President. This happened to be his method. There may be some disagreement as to how effective it was but, at least, he felt it was the best way."

Gray-haired, soft-spoken John Steelman, who once was authorized by Truman as War Mobilization Director to overrule any

Cabinet member's decision, testified from firsthand observations that Truman was a President who tried to put his own touch on every decision and every action.

Steelman said that in his view this was good. He added he thought that the people didn't want somebody else doing something they believed the President himself ought to attend to. While he conceded any President must delegate numerous powers, Steelman expressed the opinion that the chief executive ought to avoid letting the impression become prevalent in the country that somebody else was running the White House—an idea that gained extensive circulation in Eisenhower's regime.

By all odds, Truman was a fighting President. He bluffed the Russians out of Iran and fought them, short of actual war, with the Greek-Turkish doctrine and the spectacular Berlin Airlift. He tangled with those who contended the smirch of corruption had darkened the edges of his administration. He jostled with the labor unions, which had been responsible for his nomination in 1944 as the party's vice-presidential candidate instead of Byrnes or Barkley. He battled with Congress. He fought with the newspaper publishers. He fought, in a word, at the drop of a hat.

Truman's honeymoon with Congress was so short-lived it almost never existed. As early as September 1945, after Germany and Japan had capitulated, he submitted a series of reconversion proposals which the Democratic Congress pointedly ignored, as if to rebuke the upstart, accidental President. The congressional Democrats felt that they, and not Truman, were in tune with the country.

This was the era in which Big Labor was snapping its galluses. Strikes were its weapon and Truman was plagued with them. None of these was more aggravating to him than the railroad strike of May 1946.

Of course, presidential intervention in labor disputes was nothing new. Although his constitutional right to act was questionable, Grover Cleveland had sent federal troops to Chicago in 1894 in the Pullman company strike. Theodore Roosevelt had forced mediation of the 1902 anthracite coal strike. Woodrow Wilson had

intervened in eight labor controversies and Franklin Roosevelt in eleven.

There was plenty of precedent for Truman's efforts to avert the 1946 railroad strike but the impulsive President made one of those mistakes that fat, funny, and sagacious Mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia of New York most aptly described as "a beaut."

Eighteen of the twenty railroad operating unions had agreed to arbitration but Alvanley Johnston of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and A. F. Whitney of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen held out. Truman had urged them since the previous February to accept the eighteen and a half cents an hour wage increase to which the other unions had agreed but Johnston and Whitney were stubborn men and they called a strike.

His patience tried to the breaking point, Truman called the congressional leaders on the telephone and asked for a joint session of the two Houses on Saturday, May 25, to hear him deliver personally a presidential message. On Friday night he went on a national radio hookup to declare: "This is no contest between labor and management. This is a contest between a small group of men and their government."

Saturday afternoon arrived in a haze of tension. Rail traffic was dead and the nation was threatened with paralysis. Food shipments were interrupted; returning veterans were stranded, and commuters couldn't reach their jobs.

Congress was in a black mood as it assembled. Burning Tree Golf Club was without its Senate and House members. The New York delegation to the House, used to taking off on Thursdays for a long weekend at home, was on hand, for lack of transportation, if nothing else.

Promptly at the appointed hour of four o'clock Truman marched into the House chamber, laid his prepared text on the lectern, drew himself up, and launched one of the most extraordinary requests ever made of Congress by a President.

Calling for temporary legislation to authorize injunctions against labor leaders and to deprive strikers of their seniority, Truman went on:

"As a part of this temporary emergency legislation, I request the

Congress immediately to authorize the President to draft into the Armed Forces of the United States all workers who are on strike against their government."

At that point, as we watched intently from the gallery, Leslie L. Biffle, the Secretary of the Senate and Truman's good friend, sidled up to the President and shoved into his hand a note scrawled on the red scratch paper so familiar around the Senate chamber.

Glancing at it briefly, Truman interpolated into his speech these words:

"Word has just been received that the rail strike has been settled on terms proposed by the President."

At this moment, Secretary of State Byrnes, seated in the front row with the Cabinet, turned and winked broadly at Secretary of Labor Schwellenbach. We newsmen did not learn it until later, but the two Cabinet members had spent most of the night with Johnston and Whitney and had succeeded in winning an agreement with them that they would call off the strike.

Truman made no mention of the fact that he had caused a telephone call to be placed to General Eisenhower, then resting in Georgia, asking Eisenhower to take command of the troops that would run the trains. Eisenhower's subsequent version was that he had refused the assignment but had agreed to talk to the railroad brotherhood leaders when he was told he was the only one with whom they would discuss the strike. The general's comment was, "I was a soldier, not a strike breaker."

Truman, caught up in his prepared text and determined to arm himself with drastic weapons against any possible resumption of the strike, proceeded with his recommendations to Congress. When he had concluded, Speaker Rayburn announced House members would have forty minutes to read a six-page measure the President's aides had brought along. Joseph W. Martin, Jr., the House minority leader, arose to say the country had been "brought to the brink of economic collapse" and he would vote for the bill.

In its angry mood the House passed, 306 to 13, a measure which would bring the strikers to heel with what amounted to a form of involuntary servitude. This was majority government rampant,

willing to circumscribe the individual rights of Americans, heedless of any long-range consequences.

Even while the House was voting we reporters raced across the Capitol to the Senate to find and interview the one man we knew now held the fate of this extraordinary legislation. When Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio came out to the President's room, off the Senate chamber, at our request, he was characteristically blunt.

"We are not going to pass anything here today that is an insult to the men who have volunteered for our Armed Forces and now wear the American uniform," Taft declared. "We are not going to use the Armed Forces as a form of punishment for strikers."

The parliamentary situation was such in the Senate that one member's objection could prevent the measure from coming up immediately. We dispatched our stories that Truman's bill was temporarily blocked—and likely to be permanently shelved—and went to our press-gallery roost above the Senate to observe that particular bit of history take place.

Senator Alben Barkley of Kentucky, the majority leader, sought to bring up the House-passed bill. Taft asked if Barkley intended to have the Senate consider it immediately. Barkley replied that he was asking for the unanimous consent necessary under the Senate's rules for such action.

"I object," Taft replied crisply. This was the practical end to Truman's extraordinary request. After six days of subsequent debate the Senate stripped from the bill the draft-strikers provision. There was none who could match Taft's argument when he told his colleagues during the debate:

"I am not willing to vote for a measure which provides that the President shall be a dictator. It offends not only the Constitution but every basic principle for which the American Republic was established. Strikes cannot be prohibited without interfering with the basic freedom essential to our form of government."

Even though he lost that ill-considered battle, Truman demonstrated that when he desires to be, the President can be the master of the leaders of Big Labor.

Only four days before he went to Congress with the draft-strikers proposal, Truman had ordered seizure of the coal mines

and on May 29, 1946, Secretary of the Interior Julius A. Krug had put the government in the mining business by signing an agreement with the United Mine Workers' John L. Lewis.

Lewis, who was not adverse to mixing politics with labor activities, moved to put the President on a spot just before the off-year election of 1946 by bringing to issue on November 1 his demands for more pay and shorter hours for the miners. After fifteen days of negotiations—during which the Republicans had won control of both Houses of Congress—Lewis served notice he would end the contract with the government on November 20.

Truman sent his Solicitor General into court and on November 18 the government obtained an injunction to stay a strike. Lewis ignored the court order and called his men from the pits.

At the time, the country had only a thirty-day supply of coal and Europe's fuel needs were so dire that coals actually were being carried to Newcastle. Truman ordered the case against Lewis pushed and on December 3, 1946, Federal Judge T. Alan Goldsborough fined Lewis \$10,000 and his UMW \$3,500,000 for contempt of court.

Beaten by the President through the courts, Lewis ordered his men back to work but they drifted into the pits so slowly that it was not until March—when the Supreme Court upheld Lewis's \$10,000 fine but reduced the penalty on the UMW to \$700,000—that production again reached full-scale proportions.

The victory over Lewis was one of the turning points for Truman, whose political fortunes had dipped to a low level when the Republicans won the fall elections. But the Republican Congress was to prove a political blessing in disguise for the President by providing him with the kind of ammunition he knew how to use to offset the mistakes he himself was making.

With the broadside approach he always employed, Truman blamed the GOP Congress for failing to solve the farm problem, cited its refusal to reimpose price controls as the major cause for inflation, and attacked a tax cut it had enacted as being aimed only at aiding the rich. At the same time, he joined in the clamor of labor leaders who were denouncing the Taft-Hartley Act as a "slave labor" law.

But there were few signs that Truman was making progress politically. Although he had announced on March 8, 1948, he would run again, there were many Democrats who gladly would have rallied about some more popular figure—and General Eisenhower was one—if they could have persuaded such a man to make himself available.

The Republicans were breathing confidence. They knew without much doubt that Governor Thomas E. Dewey of New York would be their nominee. The public-opinion polls, which were registering a low mark for Truman's popularity among the voters, buoyed the GOP hopes.

It looked for all the world as if Harry Truman were done for.

# 10 It Couldn't Happen



The clatter of the teletypes stilled for an instant. Then their bells rang with furious insistence as the tape-fed machines spelled out:

"TRUMAN ELECTED."

It was early in the morning of November 3, 1948. The unbelievable had happened. Truman, who had gone to bed the night before thinking he was beaten, had lost New York and California but he had won the election and would be President in his own right for four more years.

Governor Dewey, who had been so certain of winning that he had "leaked" his Cabinet choices to us newsmen who were traveling with him several days before the election, had tasted bitter defeat.

Dewey had not been the only one who was fooled by the stocky, fighting little man from Missouri. Truman had listened to H. V. Kaltenborn, radio commentator, predict Dewey's election at midnight and again at four o'clock in the morning. The Chicago *Tribune* hit the streets with an early edition announcing Dewey's victory. The preponderance of the public-opinion polls had listed Dewey as the likely winner.

How, then, did Truman bring about the "great surprise?" In retrospect, the answer simply is that he created an image for the voters as a champion of the farmer, the workingman, the inflation-plagued housewife, and the citizen to whom civil rights was the overriding issue. As Truman himself put it, he was running against "the forces of reaction." Dewey, on the other hand, presented the blurred image of a candidate tiptoeing around vital issues.

Truman had begun creating his successful image in his attacks on the Republican Congress for its inaction on housing, social welfare, and minimum-wage legislation. But almost no one else believed the President was making political headway and therefore

he had to deal with insurgency in the Democratic ranks, which he did in a firm and outwardly confident manner.

When the issue was raised at a news conference one day whether he could control his party's convention and thus assure himself of nomination, Truman replied curtly that the convention would choose the chairman the President designated and would "operate in the manner in which the chairman and the President want it to do."

He was correct in that respect, although the convention which met in Philadelphia on July 12 was so funereal in many of its aspects as to suggest the party was ready to give up. That old war horse, Alben Barkley, lifted the delegates out of their seats with a folksy, fighting speech, however, and a young fellow of whom more would be heard later fused an air-clearing battle over civil rights.

Democrats seem to love to clobber each other as a part of their ritual of preparing themselves to take on the Republicans. Hubert H. Humphrey, Jr., then mayor of Minneapolis and later to become United States Senator, provided the delegates with the opportunity for strife with a minority report urging a strongly worded civil-rights plank. By a margin of sixty-nine votes, Humphrey's report was adopted at an uproarious session and the Mississippi delegation and some of the Alabama delegates walked out under the rippling folds of a Confederate flag.

There was life in the old party, all right, but by two o'clock in the morning, when Truman finally was ushered in to accept his nomination, there wasn't a weary worker left in the press section who would have given a plugged nickel for the President's chances of winning in November.

If he was discouraged by his prospects, Truman didn't show it. Striding to the microphone and grasping the arm of Barkley, who had been nominated for second place on the ticket, Truman shouted:

"Senator Barkley and I will win this election and make the Republicans like it—don't you forget that!"

In one of his typical "give 'em hell" speeches, Truman announced he was calling the Republican Congress into special ses-

sion and would demand that it enact some of the social-welfare measures the GOP had endorsed in its platform two weeks previously. These measures had been buried in the Republican-controlled House when it adjourned.

Truman said this would be a "turnip day" session, beginning on July 26. He explained that an old Missouri saw said: "On the 26th of July, sow turnips, wet or dry." The special session neither sowed nor harvested; it did next to nothing and thus provided Truman with more ammunition to contend that it was the country's worst Congress.

The odds against Truman's election were lengthened, however, by the southern revolt led by Governor J. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina on the States' Rights ticket and by Henry Wallace's excursion into the wings on the left.

Months before, Truman had told the Loyal Sons of St. Patrick in New York, "I do not want and will not accept the political support of Henry Wallace and his Communists. If joining them or permitting them to join me is the price of victory, I recommend defeat."

In the week following the Democratic convention, the newly formed Progressive party met in the same hall to produce a presidential ticket. It was, in fact, no party at all but an oddly assorted amalgamation of idealists, peace-at-any-price advocates, equal-rights supporters, and youngsters frightened by the revival of the military draft and the intensification of the cold war.

Unseen behind them were the trained and calculating Communists who saw in Wallace and Senator Glen Taylor of Idaho, his running mate, the cardboard figures for an assault on democracy. Wallace, an evangelistic dreamer, closed his eyes to the manipulation behind the scenes as he received a presidential nomination at a convention the like of which has seldom been duplicated in America.

Boys and girls hardly out of their teens, with barely enough money in their pockets for food, bedded down for the night in the carpeted corridors of Philadelphia's better hotels. The convention sessions, wild, disordered affairs, were capped by an ominous

emotional binge at Shibe Park as Wallace formally accepted his nomination.

In the glaring lights that lit the warm summer night, swarthy little Vito Marcantonio, a New York member of Congress, stood on a sound truck parked over first base in the baseball playing field. His black hair glistening and his dark eyes flashing in the illumination that framed the infield, Marcantonio pulled the microphone toward him and shrilled in a high, penetrating voice, "I say to you. . . ."

"Whooooom!" the organized response came thundering back from the packed grandstand. His cries rising above the roar, Marcantonio continued shrieking unintelligible words into the microphone. As he played the organ keys of his voice, waves of emotional sound rolled back from the banked seats.

As we reporters sat, our typewriters stilled for a moment, the ghostly shadows of Moscow's packed Red Square and of Hitler, ranting hysterically from the balcony of the Berlin Opera House, seemed to form before our eyes. Suddenly, there was a man-made chill in the July night air.

Perhaps a man may delude himself into believing the presidency is attainable under such auspices. Whether or not this was true in Wallace's case, there was present the undeniable motive of revenge against Truman, who had disowned him politically. The only practical purpose the Progressive party could serve would lie in the ability of its candidate to draw sufficient support away from the Democrats to deliver the big electoral-vote states to Dewey. And Dewey certainly was less palatable to the Progressives than Truman.

Southern segregationists who followed the banner of the States' Rights party also were seeking to punish Truman, although his stand on civil rights hardly differed from that of Dewey.

Thurmond had been nominated, with Governor Fielding Wright of Mississippi as the vice-presidential candidate, at a convention in Birmingham, Alabama, with the avowed objective of forcing the presidential election into the House of Representatives. Although the States' Righters were able to force Truman's

electors to run as independents in four states, they fell far short of their objective.

To complicate matters even before the campaign got under way, Truman made a major mistake at an August 5, 1948, White House news conference. It was the kind of steamy day that empties Washington of all but those who cannot possibly get away and the crowd of reporters who pushed through the wide door to the President's office to cluster informally about his desk was smaller than usual.

Here we had stood, elbow to elbow, to fence with that master of the game, Roosevelt. But the Truman of 1948 was not as adept at avoiding the thrust as his predecessor had been. At this point Truman still was attempting to answer all of the questions put to him without retreating into the protection of "no comment." He still maintained, however, the rule that no words of his could be quoted directly unless specific permission were given for such quotes.

The Alger Hiss case was hot news at this time. Hiss, a former State Department official, later was convicted of lying in his denial that he passed secret State Department documents to a Communist courier. On that day he was denying before the House Un-American Activities Committee that he even knew the courier, Whittaker Chambers.

An out-of-town reporter asked Truman if he believed the Communist investigations then going on constituted a sort of "red herring" to draw attention away from more important matters Congress should be considering.

"They are using these hearings simply as a red herring, to keep from doing what they ought to do," Truman replied bluntly. When a Washington correspondent asked if the President could be quoted directly on this answer, Truman replied that he could. Thus materialized the "red-herring" incident which the Republicans were to combine with Secretary of State Dean Acheson's observation that "I shall not turn my back on Alger Hiss" to form the foundation for the Communist-in-government charges they used so effectively in the 1952 campaign.

After his August blooper, Truman's campaign for re-election got

off to a bad start. Local organization efforts failed to fill the hall when he spoke at Omaha, Nebraska, and the President underwent the painful experience of addressing row upon row of empty seats. This merely added to the popular belief that Truman would be a dead duck in November.

The candidate himself, however, exuded confidence as he went about his business of battering the Republican Congress to a pulp.

Traveling with Truman in a campaign was always an experience in frustration. Advance copies of his speeches often were not produced in time for the early deadlines of morning papers. Sometimes Truman omitted portions of speeches the newsmen had used for their "leads." At least once he threw away a whole speech that already was in print in most of the papers.

Riding the Truman campaign train also was a marathon undertaking. One never knew when the President would decide to pop out on the rear platform at some whistle stop at five-thirty o'clock in the morning as a prelude to a day which might end well after midnight.

For those who couldn't sleep, there usually was a 'round-the-clock poker game going in the press work car. One that I remember having drifted in and out of ran for five days. Only one game was played: a complicated seven-card stud, with low-hole card, and all up like it, wild. The betting limit was two dollars, without any curb on the raises. It provided a fine exercise in mathematics, albeit sometimes a costly one.

One of these games was in full blast when Truman's campaign train pulled into Eugene, Oregon, on his October 1948 swing. It was to be a brief stop and Truman was expected to recite the customary words with some minor revisions, so the game went on uninterrupted.

The players dropped their cards, however, when the loud-speaker hookup blared out the voice of Truman, who had conferred with Stalin in Potsdam in July 1945, telling the crowd:

"I like old Uncle Joe Stalin. Joe is a decent fellow but he is the prisoner of the Politburo. The people who run the government won't let him be as decent as he would like to be."

By all of the rules of the game this amazingly naïve characteri-

zation of one of the world's most cold-blooded despots should have cost Truman dearly. But it didn't seem to matter with the voters who daily were getting more and more interested in what Truman had to say about that Republican Congress he was berating. Russia was far away in those days and there were more pressing problems at home. And the Democratic candidate was beginning to create the image of a man much better qualified to grapple with these problems than his Republican opponent.

Dewey, on the other hand, was busy avoiding commitments that might embarrass him as President. An alert, ambitious, head-cracking governor, Dewey had learned a great deal in his unsuccessful 1944 campaign against Roosevelt.

He had learned, among other things, that ridicule could be devastating to a presidential candidate. That lesson came in capsule form in Roosevelt's famous speech to the Teamsters' Union.

In 1944 the Republicans felt their only hope of electing a President lay in attempting to demonstrate that Roosevelt was squandering the assets of the nation by mismanagement of the war effort.

Because of the war, Dewey himself was under wraps. He had agreed at a secret conference with General Marshall to remain silent about the fact that the United States had broken the Japanese code and was using vital information thus gained to destroy the enemy's fleet. MacArthur had not yet returned to the Philippines and the decisive naval battle of Leyte Gulf was yet to be won.

Herbert Brownell, Dewey's campaign manager, wrote later that he had intended to "disclose the truth about Pearl Harbor"—with the implication that Roosevelt was responsible for the disaster there—but that Dewey had said he would not expose the shattering defeat the United States had suffered even if it cost him the presidency.

With their candidate restrained, the Republicans cast about for other methods of attacking Roosevelt. As a part of this pattern, GOP Representative Harold Knutson of Minnesota arose in the House one day to relate that Fala, Roosevelt's Scotty dog, had somehow been left behind on the President's trip to Alaska and

that a destroyer had been sent back 1000 miles from Seattle, at considerable cost, to reclaim the animal.

Republicans believed this incident would arouse the home folk, whose gasoline was rationed and who were struggling with food shortages and other home-front problems.

Roosevelt had been scheduled to make a labor speech before the Teamsters and, in fact, the speech had been written, but F.D.R. threw it away and dipped into his reservoir of ridicule.

"The Republican leaders have not been content with attacks on me, or my wife, or on my sons . . . they now include my little dog, Fala," he said. "Well, of course I don't resent them and my family doesn't resent attacks, but Fala does resent them. . . .

"You know, Fala is Scotch. . . . As soon as he learned that Republican fiction writers had concocted a story that I had left him behind on the Aleutian Islands and had sent a destroyer back to find him at a cost to the taxpayer of two or three or eight or twenty million dollars—his Scotch soul was furious. He has not been the same dog since."

The nation roared with Roosevelt at Dewey and the Republicans. The GOP candidate had been flicked aside like a bothersome fly. Laughter of that kind can be fatal in politics and Dewey knew he had been wounded grievously. With mirth Roosevelt had destroyed the climate in which the Republicans could make headway with their charges that the President was guilty of laxity or mismanagement of the war effort.

The Republican candidate had spoken to a crowd of about 90,000 in the Coliseum at Los Angeles on the same Saturday night. His hopes had been buoyed by this turnout until he learned the full import of Roosevelt's speech.

As his "Victory Special" campaign train moved eastward, Dewey and his aides struggled to find an answer. But it was not until noon Sunday that James C. Hagerty, Dewey's press representative, made his way to the work car to read us a single typed sheet which avoided all mention of Fala and concentrated on a fresh and furious attack on Roosevelt. As the train pulled into the little railroad town of Belen, New Mexico, we newsmen hit the dirt to find a telephone to dictate for our wires the GOP candi-

date's reply. But it was wasted effort for relatively few voters paid any attention to it.

Dewey lost his temper on that occasion and never regained it in the 1944 campaign. He was determined in 1948 to conduct his campaign with a dignity that would leave no opening for ridicule. It was to be an even-tempered campaign in which he would play the statesman at all times. There was no need to slug with Truman; the "champ" was gone and his inept successor could be counted upon to defeat himself.

Dewey talked a great deal about national unity and efforts to bring about a dependable world peace. He promised to "sweep out the cobwebs" of sixteen years of Democratic rule in Washington. He proposed programs for social progress, but nowhere was he specific in his pledges.

Compared with Truman's flailing tactics, Dewey's efforts seemed to flow out of a well-oiled machine. The Republican candidate's voice on radio was resonant and confident. He made a good appearance, except for what to him was his distressing lack of height (he was five feet, eight inches tall). But somehow, as Alice Longworth was supposed to have said, he still looked the part of "the little man on the wedding cake." How many people voted against him because they thought he didn't look like a President nobody will ever know, but this undoubtedly was one of the influences in the surprising result.

In any event, Truman won the election, to the tune of 303 electoral votes against Dewey's 189 and Thurmond's 39. Truman had only 49.5 per cent of the total popular vote since the minority parties had siphoned off 5.4 per cent, but he was President in his own right and he would act forthrightly.

Even the Republicans had to admire Truman's political ability. Senator Taft, who had campaigned for Dewey, went abroad with Mrs. Taft, leaving behind a handwritten letter to Truman that was to bounce around a bit in the political slipstream.

Taft had always been Truman's favorite Republican target. The Democratic President had said repeatedly he hoped the GOP would nominate the Ohio senator because he would be "the easiest to beat."

But Taft held no grudges and he wrote Truman a congratulatory letter on winning the election, saying that there were many areas in which he and the President could agree and suggesting that they work together in such areas.

Taft had instructed I. Jack Martin, his administrative assistant, to deliver the letter personally to Truman. When Martin arrived to carry out the assignment, Truman waved his visitor to a chair and then spent ten minutes praising the man with whom he had fought so bitterly in public. One thing was sure, Truman said, you always knew where Taft stood on any issue.

Because he was pleased by Taft's gesture, Truman read the Ohio senator's letter at a Cabinet meeting. Someone there remarked that Taft seemed glad Truman had beaten Dewey, an observation that found its way into a book written by James Forrestal, the Secretary of Defense.

When Taft was in the market in 1952 for the Republican presidential nomination again, this incident was used by the senator's critics to support the contention that he had been disloyal to Dewey as the 1948 nominee. Taft, who had no copy, appealed to Truman to return the letter. Obligingly the President had the files searched, found the original, and sent it back to Taft, who then proceeded to lay low this particular charge.

However, the rapprochement between Taft and Truman did not carry over into the new Democratic Congress that had been elected with the President. There the Republicans whom Taft directed coalesced with the southern Democrats to block civil-rights legislation, prevent repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act, and defeat many of Truman's domestic proposals.

Senator Arthur Vandenberg, Michigan Republican, kept most of his GOP senatorial colleagues lined up in support of continued financing of the European Recovery Program, extension of the Reciprocal Trade Agreements authority, and ratification of the North Atlantic Security Pact.

There was coming, however, a foreign-policy decision of the first magnitude that the President would make himself, without consulting Congress. His decision would be supported at the time and later attacked bitterly by those who were to weave it into the

pattern of a political campaign by which a hero general would be elected President.

On June 24, 1950, when he was in Independence, Missouri, Truman got a telephone call from Secretary of State Dean Acheson advising him that the North Koreans had invaded South Korea. That unhappy country had been divided along the thirty-eighth parallel since the Japanese surrender, with Communists controlling the northern portion and the southern portion held by the Republic of Korea.

Told the next morning that an all-out invasion appeared to be under way, Truman flew back to Washington for a three-hour conference with his top aides. Meanwhile, Acheson was moving to get the United Nations Security Council to order a cease-fire and to offer assistance to the South Koreans, an action finally taken by a 9 to 0 vote in the absence of the Russian representative.

Alarmed at developments, Republican senators met and agreed that the United States should furnish South Korea with weapons and supplies but should not allow the fighting there to involve the country in war. At the same point, however, Senator Tom Connally, Texas Democrat who headed the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee, was saying the free nations might have to act "over and above the United Nations" if that became necessary to check Communist aggression.

Truman was not consulting the senators, however, and as the military situation deteriorated, he ordered General MacArthur to use American air and naval forces to support the ROK's faltering troops. It was not until the next day that Truman called the congressional leaders to the White House to tell them of his decision. By this time debate had broken out in Congress. Senator James Kem, Missouri Republican, asked the Senate if the President had "arrogated to himself the authority of declaring war."

Senator Knowland came to Truman's defense with the assertion that "the President should have the support of all Americans in this policy."

Taft arose to make it clear that he, too, was supporting the employment of American forces, but the Ohio senator argued that Truman was not justified in acting without the approval of Con-

gress. Nevertheless, Taft added, "I see no choice except to back wholeheartedly and with every available resource the American men in our armed forces who have been moved into Korea."

By June 30 Truman decided more than air and sea aid was needed and he ordered United States ground forces into Korea. The President had demonstrated again that the initiative for American action must come primarily from the White House. He had told Congress of his decisions only after they were made. Nevertheless, had he chosen to ask Congress at that point to approve his course there would have been no doubt such a resolution could have been passed overwhelmingly. But Truman contented himself with instructing Vice-President Barkley to brief the congressional leaders on the international crisis.

A resolution of approval would have commanded the votes of many of those who were able in 1952, because of the short memory of the American people, to call the Korean conflict "Truman's war." Truman failed to force these members of Congress to put themselves on the record and thereby permitted them to avoid any responsibility for the fighting they supported at the time but later came to criticize when it became apparent that the United States could not win because of the restrictions placed on military activities to prevent a general Far Eastern war.

Truman was having his troubles on the domestic scene also. He had promulgated a loyalty order in 1947 to eliminate subversives from the government. But the Hiss case in 1948, the trial of eleven top leaders of the U.S. Communist party in 1949, the Judith Coplon espionage trial in 1950, and the conviction that year in British courts of Klaus Fuchs, German-born physicist, on atomic spying charges had begun to create among American voters a climate of fear about security. This was the climate in which McCarthyism thrived like a mushroom.

Senator Estes Kefauver of Tennessee caught the nation's attention with his televised investigation of interstate crime, and evidence of corruption began to show up within administration circles. Secretary of the Treasury John Snyder demanded the resignation of James P. Finnegan, St. Louis Collector of Internal Revenue. Shortly thereafter George J. Schoeneman, the Commis-

sioner of Internal Revenue, also resigned. The collectors at Boston, San Francisco, and Brooklyn were removed and thirty-one other Internal Revenue Bureau officials fired. T. Lamar Caudle, Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Justice Department's tax division, went out, as did Charles Oliphant, chief counsel for the revenue bureau.

A \$9450 mink coat given to a White House stenographer and \$300 freezers accepted by White House aides Major General Harry Vaughan, Matt Connelly, and James K. Vardaman—as well as one to Mrs. Truman—had added grist to the unfavorable publicity that was pouring out against the Truman administration.

When Truman moved belatedly to clean up the situation, a comedy of errors resulted which helped convince the country there was a “mess in Washington,” as the Republicans were to carol in the 1952 presidential campaign.

Truman appointed Newbold Morris of New York to investigate corruption among federal officials. Morris’s initial efforts angered Attorney General J. Howard McGrath, who had presided over Truman’s election in 1948 as Democratic National Chairman, and McGrath fired Morris. Truman promptly fired McGrath, replacing him with James P. McGranery.

All of this added up to the creation of a climate with which a Democratic presidential nominee could hardly hope to cope in 1952. Adlai E. Stevenson, the party’s nominee, actually did attempt to divorce himself from the Truman administration’s record but the circumstances made this impossible.

Although he was beset on all sides by adversity, Truman managed to keep aglow the image he had created as the most earthy of Presidents since old Andy Jackson. Like Jackson, Truman could summon the dignity required for any performance of his ceremonial duties as chief of state but he was in essence a shirt-sleeve President with little taste for the formalities.

The amusing incident of the two diplomatic dinners demonstrated how informal Truman could be when he chose.

With the White House under repair, the Truman family had moved across the street to the government-owned home that Francis Preston Blair originally had purchased when he moved to

Washington to establish a party-line newspaper to support his good friend, Andrew Jackson.

Because the Blair House was not as spacious as the White House, State Department protocol experts decided that Truman would have to split the annual presidential diplomatic dinner and give two such affairs.

Accordingly, with the President's approval, the protocol men decided to start at the top of the diplomatic list, inviting the ranking No. 1 foreign diplomat and all odd-numbered colleagues to the first dinner.

For the second dinner, a week later, invitations went to the No. 2 diplomat on the list and all even-numbered colleagues. This was done with the idea of preventing either of the dinners from having a second-rate appearance, as would have happened if the top half of the list had been invited first and the bottom half to the second dinner.

The first dinner went off well enough. But at five o'clock on the afternoon of the second dinner, Secretary of State Acheson called the White House to ask for an emergency appointment with the President. Truman promptly granted the request and Acheson brought along the State Department's chief protocol officer, Stanley Woodward.

A terrific crisis had arisen, Truman was informed by the worried diplomats. Alexander S. Panyushkin, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, had telephoned—telephoned, mind you—that due to unavoidable circumstances he could not attend the President's dinner that night.

Woodward was sure this was a deliberate action, calculated by Panyushkin to emphasize his resentment for the imagined insult of having been invited to the second, and not the first, dinner.

"What shall we do?" Woodward asked Truman anxiously, wringing his hands.

"Tell that S.O.B. Pincushion we don't give a damn whether he comes or not," Truman replied.

"My God," Woodward exclaimed, turning to the Secretary of State, "how am I going to translate that into diplomatic language?"

Truman was handy with the "S.O.B." references for individuals he didn't like, including newspaper columnist Drew Pearson and some others. He defied convention by joining, among other organizations, a society to maintain the existence of barbershop quartets. He chafed at the limitations of the White House, calling it "the finest prison in the world."

But he was acting as a strong President despite the setbacks he often received. Perhaps the most historical of the latter involved his order of April 8, 1952, directing the Secretary of Commerce to seize and operate most of the country's steel mills.

Truman reported to Congress that he had relied on his general powers as President and suggested that the lawmakers had the authority to supersede his order if they could find any other way of preventing a strike.

In this, however, Truman lacked the support of popular opinion that usually was with him. The Supreme Court ruled against him, 6 to 3, largely on the grounds that Congress had refused to pass laws authorizing seizure of plants in labor disputes.

But despite the loss of this battle, Truman went his way, acting, as he put it, as "the only lobbyist the whole people have in Washington." If his language sometimes was undiplomatic and his actions often impulsive, Truman nevertheless had displayed the fortitude and the ability to make America rise to its convictions in a series of world crises.

Winston Churchill, who dealt often with him, said that Truman's "celerity, wisdom and courage" in the Korean crisis "made him worthy in my estimation to be numbered among the greatest of American Presidents."

But perhaps the warmest tribute to Truman came from an unexpected source—tough old John Lewis, who was personally poorer by \$10,000 and whose union had forfeited \$700,000 in a battle with the President.

In the mellowing passage of the years, Lewis came one day in 1957 to a private luncheon given for Truman by his old associates and friends on the Senate's war investigating committee. There were many there who had kind words to say about the former President. Finally, it came Lewis's turn and every ear was cocked

for what the unpredictable, irascible old labor leader would say.

Simply and without flourishes, Lewis said he regarded Truman as a man of the people, "an institution—an American tribune, if you please."

"His strength came from the people," Lewis said. "He expressed the thoughts of the American people."

Truman had borne the burdens of the presidency well from 1945 through 1952. He had, for most of that period, been the voice of the American people. But in 1952 a new image was arising; the pendulum was swinging toward a man Truman then called friend but later would regard as an enemy.

## 11 A Clear Call



"I am not available for and could not accept nomination to high political office. My decision to remove myself completely from the political arena is definite and positive."

When General Dwight D. Eisenhower fed those words into the army's official duplicating machines on January 22, 1948, he "meant every word of it," as he told us newsmen with conviction three months later in the White House lobby after a conference with President Truman.

It can be recorded as more than passing strange that the man Truman defeated in 1948—Governor Thomas E. Dewey of New York—should be the one who eventually pushed the button to change the Eisenhower political signal from red to green. For it was scarcely a year later that Dewey, who was supposed to be busily engaged in licking his wounds from his surprising defeat by Truman, began from the New York capital at Albany one of the most expert king-making campaigns in American history. What his critics would learn in time was that Dewey might be beaten but he was never going to be down. He had a bounce that was as high as Theodore Roosevelt's and that is about as high as you can go in American history.

If Dewey had not nurtured carefully—as one does with an early spring flower—the idea of the general's availability for the 1952 Republican candidacy, Eisenhower might have retired to that Gettysburg, Pennsylvania farm to read all those books he never found time for in the army, as a university president, and as President of the United States. Whether bridge, golf, and quail shooting might have been more interesting is a matter to be discussed later in this narrative.

It is a fact, however, that since George Washington grumbled about having to take on the burdens of the presidency in response to popular demand, no man had been such a sought-after candi-

date as Eisenhower. Ulysses S. Grant, another military hero, had his admirers. But in Grant there was an early and supine seeking of the office that was lacking in the modern-day general. Eisenhower had had world acclaim of a kind not often offered to a mortal. He was satisfied with his attainments—there were no more rivers to cross, no bridgeheads to establish and maintain, no mountains to scale; only the peaceful, bucolic valleys lay ahead.

Down through the decades there had grown up a classical pattern of action for those who covet the presidency. It was compounded out of the nineteenth-century belief that there was something unethical about giving the appearance of seeking the high office. This pattern of non-action carried over in the long-gone years to the nominees who did not deign to campaign.

Part of this mold was composed of that ineffable tradition that a man who was available for the presidency should not openly seek it. Andy Jackson, who wanted to be President about as ardently as any man who ever came in sight of it, tossed off the comment that "the presidency cannot be properly sought nor declined." Harry Truman, who loved being the nation's head man, said more truthfully that "if a man ever starts out to make himself President, he hardly ever arrives."

Thus the first stage the political observer encountered was the candidate's simulated surprise that anyone should suggest his name for such an exalted position.

"Oh, for goodness sake," most of them exclaimed, "that man is a little off the beam, suggesting me for President. Of course, I appreciate his mentioning me, but really I am not in the least qualified to be President."

This kind of expression fitted in with the early pose of those who ignored questions about their possible candidacy or turned them off with laughter. The next step, naturally, was that of fulsome denial of presidential aspirations, accompanied by the depreciation of personal qualifications.

Soon, however, there emerged the softened phrases of ambition's denial, the equivocal answer to questions about the political future. Finally—and, of course, it had to be dragged out of them, as it were—there came the modest admission that, yes, if the peo-

ple want me, I would be happy to serve my country in any capacity.

Only a sound track could do justice to the diminishing tempo of publicly displayed reluctance with which statesmen, generals, engineers, governors, senators, businessmen—and even some pretty thoroughgoing scoundrels like Blaine—have become candidates for President of the United States.

But Eisenhower was outside this pattern. Even to the cynics of the press table he sounded for a long time like a man who wasn't really interested in being President. In later years, after he was President, we were to think back on this and wonder if his performance in the office had justified our earlier views.

Eight times the American people have turned to generals for their Presidents. But only once, in the case of Eisenhower, was he a lifelong professional soldier. Even Grant had tasted the economic adversity of civilian life during a checkered career before he managed to get back in uniform on the fringes of the Civil War. Until he became President of Columbia University at the age of a full general's retirement, Eisenhower had concerned himself with purely military matters and had held himself so aloof from the political life stream of the nation that he had not even bothered to vote.

Why, then, should the American people become so enamored with a military figure who had demonstrated time and again he had no use for the political functions by which the government operates? The answer lies in the fact that one clever and persistent man was able to capitalize vicariously on the hero worship that lies less than skin-deep in any American and to influence—beyond practical recourse—a political party's choice of its candidate for President.

This is not to say that Thomas E. Dewey, a strangely powerful man with a driving force seldom equaled in American politics, made Eisenhower President. But it is to say that if it had not been for Dewey, Eisenhower probably would not have been President.

On the day when General Marshall picked him to command the Allied Forces in Europe, Eisenhower entered the select class

of men who automatically become potential presidential candidates.

But in the stress of World War II, few consciously thought of Eisenhower as a presidential candidate, even though the general was presented with, and took advantage of, the opportunity to become a national hero. He had been so little known when he was appointed chief of staff for the Third Army in the Louisiana maneuvers in June 1941 that a news photograph identified him as "Lieutenant Colonel D. D. Ersenbeing." But the light colonel moved up fast and on June 11, 1942, he was told that he would command the European Theater operations.

At that time a worried Pentagon public-relations officer sought help from the newsmen who were covering that command post in the war. The press-relations officer explained carefully that a little-known light colonel had been picked for a big job but added that he was a "pretty colorless" fellow. The PRO begged the reporters to help publicize the new man in the interests of the war effort. As an afterthought, he suggested hopefully that maybe the officer's nickname would help. The nickname, he said, was "Ike."

That June of 1941 was only the beginning of a climactic month for Eisenhower. It was on June 6, 1944, that he gave the laconic "let 'er rip" signal for the D-Day invasion of Europe. In those three years between his designation to head the European command and the occupation of Germany, people had learned to spell Eisenhower's name and had come to consider him a hero worthy of worship. The hero worship was in full swing by 1945 and it reached its peak seven years later.

The climate was right and the conditions propitious for the making of a presidential candidate. The planting of the first seed, however, came about in a curious and unexpected way.

Venerable Senator Arthur Capper, a Kansas Republican, was casting about one day for a topic to discuss on his weekly recorded broadcasts for a string of Kansas radio stations. It had been a dull week in Washington, with nothing of importance happening in Capper's chosen field of agricultural legislation.

Capper, an acute politician, had managed, despite his residence in Kansas, to accumulate a scattering of votes for the presiden-

tial nomination at Republican conventions. But at this point the kindly octogenarian, a widower, was more interested in escorting trim, blonde young ladies to National Press Club dances than he was in any kind of politics.

One of Capper's assistants came up with an idea for the radio broadcast: why not promote Eisenhower, who had spent his boyhood in Kansas, for the Republican presidential nomination? The senator was agreeable and a script was prepared.

Capper eased his emaciated frame into a chair, grasped the microphone, and in his high, quavering voice told the people of Kansas who cared to listen:

"I have come to the conclusion that General Eisenhower of Kansas is my candidate for the Republican nomination and for President in 1948. I would say that General Eisenhower is a statesman, a diplomat, as well as a soldier—perhaps the closest to George Washington we have ever produced in our national history."

Capper prophesied that the next decade would be one in which the understanding of the use of military forces as an instrument in world politics would be one of the essentials of national leadership.

"As a peaceful man of Quaker descent," Capper continued, "I never anticipated that I would ever suggest, or support, a professional soldier for the White House. As a matter of fact, if I regarded General Eisenhower merely as a professional soldier . . . I would not now be suggesting him for the presidency.

"I regard him as a statesman-executive of the highest caliber, with a military background and an acquaintance at firsthand with the intricacies of world politics."

Cynical Washington sized up the Capper plug for what it was—a harmless air-time filler that would bring the senator commendatory letters and would make all Kansas feel that Capper was a right smart fellow to be boosting a Kansas man that way.

It was no mere coincidence that a rather important Democrat, President Truman, also was thinking of Eisenhower in terms of a potential presidential candidate for his party. This was in the period of the Potsdam Conference when Truman had not as yet

shucked off some of the excessive humility he carried into the presidency.

As Eisenhower related their conversation in his book, *Crusade in Europe*, Truman told him:

"General, there is nothing you may want that I won't try to help you get. That definitely includes the presidency in 1948."

"Mr. President," Eisenhower wrote that he replied, "I don't know who will be your opponent for the presidency, but it will not be I."

Nearly a decade, in which he became embittered at his successor, was to pass before Truman disputed this version.

In a filmed interview put on the air in 1958, Truman rewrote a bit of history. He said that he hadn't offered Eisenhower the Democratic nomination but had expressed the opinion "that a man at the top of a military reputation could only have that reputation smeared if he went into politics, because being the commanding general of the armed forces of a nation is entirely different from being the head of the state in a political job."

The Truman-Eisenhower conversation had no publicity at the time. Capper's pronouncement made only a little ripple on the ocean of public opinion, one that Eisenhower could publicly ignore. The general, busy with military chores, let it be known through his public-relations staff members—"friends of the general" they were called in news dispatches—that he wasn't interested in politics.

Nine months later, however, Eisenhower felt called upon to deny in Frankfurt, Germany, reports that he might succeed Averell Harriman, later the governor of New York, as ambassador to Great Britain. Any such appointment would have put the general into a political stream in which he might have been expected to bob up as one of those mentioned for the 1948 Democratic presidential nomination. Partly to squelch any such possibility, Eisenhower said there existed "no possibility of my ever being connected with any political office."

There were plenty of members of the Washington press corps who felt then that Eisenhower would become involved in politics before he was finished with public life. This, however, was before

the general had amassed an impressive string of negatives in answering countless overtures.

Even before he doffed his uniform to become president of Columbia University on June 7, 1948, Eisenhower became the object of two presidential "draft" movements.

Late in 1947 Senator Charles Tobey, mercurial New Hampshire Republican, fluffed up a flurry of interest by announcing his backing for a "Draft Eisenhower League" in his state. The league had been formed originally in New York by some political newcomers but had moved its headquarters to New Hampshire where Tobey's endorsement gained it attention. The emotional Tobey had wandered far out in left field in Republican affairs, however, and his support of the movement had little practical effect.

In any event, Eisenhower emptied a pitcher of cold water on the movement in an October 16, 1947, visit to Manchester, New Hampshire, when he said bluntly, "I don't want anything to do with politics." This was merely a reiteration of a September 23 statement in Morgantown, West Virginia, that "I want nothing to do with politics and I want no political office."

Some of us who had wondered in print if the general was travelling around getting himself acquainted with local political situations began to have some doubts. Here, it seemed, was that rare individual who meant it when he said he didn't want to be President.

But the daring young men on the draft-Eisenhower trapeze kept the bar swinging. They announced plans to put the general's name in Republican state primaries. They threatened to upset the arrangements in states where the old pros of the party had been doing underground work for Dewey, Taft, Stassen, and other hopefuls.

Eisenhower finally had to step in to quell the uprising. On January 23, 1948, the general released through the publicity division of the Department of the Army in Washington a letter he had addressed to Leonard V. Finder, publisher of the Manchester, New Hampshire *Evening Leader*. Finder had written Eisenhower, urging him to become a candidate for the Republican presidential nomination.

In the light of the criticism that developed later over his methods of operating the presidency, Eisenhower's letter was in some respects revealing.

"I am not available and could not accept nomination to high political office," Eisenhower wrote Finder. "My decision to remove myself completely from the political scene is definite and positive."

Further, he told Finder that "nothing in the international or domestic situation especially qualifies for the most important office in the world a man whose adult years have been spent in the country's military forces." In oblique deference to any political ambitions General Douglas MacArthur might have held, Eisenhower added, "At least, this is true in my case."

General Grant had put the same thought into simpler words when he was first approached about running for President and before he changed his mind about a political career.

"No," Grant said, "I am a military man, not a statesman. I would just like to be mayor of Galena [Illinois] to build a sidewalk from my home to the station."

Zachary Taylor had been another general who, at first blush, didn't want to be President. From the headquarters of the Army of Occupation in Matamoros, Mexico, in 1846 he wrote, "It becomes me sincerely and frankly to acknowledge to you that for the office I have no aspiration whatever." Later he weakened, however, saying that "I am not prepared to say that I shall refuse if the country calls me to the presidential office."

Of course, William Tecumseh Sherman demonstrated in 1884 there was a way for a general to put an end to all of the political monkey business, if he chose to do so.

"I will not accept if nominated and will not serve if elected," Sherman said bluntly. That had a note of finality no potential candidate for the President since has been willing to match.

Eisenhower's letter to Finder seemed to leave little room for a draft movement but if the Republican amateurs were discouraged some old pros among the Democrats remained hopeful they could entice the general into running on their ticket.

No one was certain whether Eisenhower was a Republican or a

Democrat. He occupied a position in this respect similar to that of Herbert Hoover before the latter had entered Harding's Cabinet. Prior to that time, reporters of the day had no more luck pinning down Hoover's political views than those of a later day had with Eisenhower.

Organization Democrats frankly didn't care much what Eisenhower's political views were. They wanted to dump Truman because they didn't believe he could win in November. The war hero looked like the man for them and illogically they argued themselves into the belief that Eisenhower had rebuffed the Republicans because he felt he was too "liberal" for that party and was really a Democrat at heart. Incidentally, those Democrats who seemed to want him most in 1948 became Eisenhower's severest critics after he was elected as a Republican President.

Singularly enough, the New York Liberal party's policy committee was the first to start the 1948 Democratic "draft" movement for Eisenhower rolling with a March 29 resolution calling on him to become a candidate. The Liberal party customarily joined in supporting Democratic candidates in the November general elections and thus was in a position to influence the Democrats to choose candidates who were somewhat left of center.

Early in July Americans for Democratic Action (ADA), another liberal organization, also launched a campaign to draft Eisenhower for the Democratic nomination. James Roosevelt, tall son of F.D.R., teamed up with bald, stubby Jacob M. Arvey, who ran the Illinois party machine as Democratic national committeeman, in the draft movement. Roosevelt and Arvey, along with the big city bosses, wanted a winner.

Southerners who were angered with Truman's proposals for congressional action on civil-rights legislation looked longingly on Eisenhower. They had no idea what his views were on the civil-rights issue but they knew where Truman stood and they didn't like what they knew.

Senator Olin D. Johnston of South Carolina, who was to say in later years that Eisenhower just didn't know anything about running the government, paid the general a visit and announced that he regarded Eisenhower as "the man of the hour" for the Demo-

cratic nomination. Johnston was the first southerner to rush to Washington to burble his congratulations to Truman personally after the President had been re-elected in November.

In their efforts to dump Truman the Democratic liberals were responding to the cardinal law of politics: Take anybody, no matter what his views, if he looks like a winner; desert anybody, no matter what his record, if he looks like a loser.

If Truman had not felt that practical politics required him to embrace all of the New Deal and go even a bit further, he might have followed his natural inclination toward the middle of the road. When he succeeded to the presidency, we newsmen recorded predictions from most of his former Senate colleagues that Truman would be a moderate.

Instead, the new President had warmed over the New Deal, added some recommendations for civil rights and reconversion legislation, and labeled this as a "Fair Deal" program. Just as F.D.R. went back to the first Roosevelt's "Square Deal" and to Wilson's "New Freedoms" for material and a label, so Truman plagiarized a bit on the past.

But the country, in a rebellious mood over meat shortages and other rationing irritations, had elected in 1946 a Republican Congress which had thrown Truman for a loss every time he tried to carry the ball for the liberals. In this situation, the liberals and the party bosses read the signs of Truman's defeat and, being politicians primarily, they ran. One word from Eisenhower indicating he was available probably would have forced Truman out of the contest for the nomination at that point.

That Eisenhower refused in 1948 to consider what almost certainly would have been nomination and election by either party made all the more striking his acceptance in 1952. Eisenhower subsequently said he was never a Democrat and could not in good conscience accept that party's platform or principles. This did not prevent him, however, from laying down in his early State of the Union messages programs that were tabbed by members of both parties as indicating the President meant to kidnap the New Deal.

Only a month after he was installed as president of Columbia, Eisenhower brought his foot crashing down on the Democratic

draft movement being organized by the strange alliance of old pros and political bubbleheads.

"I will not at this time identify myself with any political party and could not accept nomination for any public office or participate in partisan political contest," he said.

Despite this, those who were seeking to draft him arranged a "spontaneous" rally of about 5000 cheering admirers around Eisenhower's Morningside Heights residence in New York. But when the flares and the last hurrah had died away, Eisenhower remained firm.

The never-say-die boys continued their drive, however, until Senator Claude Pepper of Florida, a rabid New Dealer, got the final crushing news. When Pepper galloped up to a group of reporters on July 9, just three days before the Democratic convention was to open in Philadelphia, he bore with him a telegram from Eisenhower. In it was the general's "final and complete" refusal to stand for the nomination.

At the time all of this was highly satisfactory to Dewey, who had his own ambitious plans for 1948. The general's refusal to run made it certain Truman would be the Democratic nominee. Truman looked like a pushover and Dewey was already dreaming of what he would do in the presidency.

Truman came out fighting, however, and their fifth consecutive presidential contest defeat left the Republicans close to political bankruptcy. GOP soul-searching was the order of the day and a great many members of the party came to the conclusion their candidate four years hence must be a man not too conspicuously labeled as a Republican and one relatively untouched by political controversy. Dewey was among the early converts to this type of thinking.

About a month after the election, Senator Harry Darby of Kansas, who was powerful in Republican councils, came up with a familiar answer to the party's problem. Why not Eisenhower? he asked. Darby added that he wouldn't be surprised if the general became a candidate. Although I had my own doubts on this score, I dutifully recorded Darby's views.

Shortly thereafter, Senator Harry Cain, Washington Republi-

can, seconded Darby's prediction. But Eisenhower was telling a Fort Worth, Texas, news conference at about this time: "Frankly, I have no political angle and I'm not going to let any sort of talk by others make me a candidate."

If Eisenhower's freewheeling excursion into Texas was non-political, it nevertheless brought him into contact with some of the wealthy oilmen who turned up as fat-cat contributors to the Republican coffers in 1952. Nominally, these Texans were Democrats. But they liked the language Eisenhower spoke when, for instance, he said in Galveston on December 8:

"If all Americans want is security, they can go to prison. They'd have enough to eat, a bed, and a roof over their heads. But if an American wants to preserve his dignity and his equality as a human being, he must not bow his neck to any dictatorial government."

Commenting on "the illusion called security," Eisenhower added that "We want to wear fine shirts, have caviar and champagne, when we ought to be eating hot dogs and beer." The Texas oilmen kind of liked their caviar and champagne, but they sure didn't want a paternalistic government spreading a social-security blanket ever wider over those unenterprising folks who were still working toward their first million dollars.

Many Republicans thought Eisenhower was beginning to talk like one of them and we political reporters had to agree. But the general still didn't want to get himself tied up with any political party. He had registered to vote in New York in October without listing any party affiliation. His explanation of this action was revealing of his concept of political relationships.

"I'd lose a lot of friends and I'm not going to do that," he said. "I have no political connections, no political ambitions and don't want any connection with politics."

Meanwhile, Dewey had reached some quiet decisions. He himself would make no immediate third bid for his party's nomination, a gesture which he realized might be futile in any event. Nor had he any intention of following the example of William Jennings Bryan, who let four years lapse between his second and third presidential nominations.

The chief problem Dewey faced was what to do about Taft. The internationalists who had backed Dewey had been able to control the GOP conventions of 1944 and 1948, despite the domination by Taft and his followers of the Republican National Committee.

The continuing division within the party was epitomized by the two leaders. Dewey stood for wholehearted co-operation with other free nations and unstinted aid to America's allies. He favored the kind of social advancement at home that had earned for him the derisively applied "me too" label in his 1944 campaign against Roosevelt.

On the other hand, Taft gave grudging acceptance to what became the necessity in the post-World War II era for linking American defenses with overseas allies. Taft sponsored housing and aid-to-education measures in Congress but he was otherwise intent on balancing the budget and preventing the spread of the federal government's paternalism.

The Taft men of the party always regarded Dewey as a crisply self-centered individual with a driving ambition to be President but one who lacked the personal warmth to put himself over with the mass of voters. If they were disappointed that Dewey was defeated by Truman, they succeeded in concealing it remarkably well.

The Dewey supporters had used the "can't win" shibboleth against Taft so long they had come to believe it themselves. Dewey was convinced a Taft nomination would turn the party's course toward reaction and he honestly felt that meant continued defeats.

But Dewey well knew the truth of the adage that "you can't beat somebody with nobody." He had to have a live-and-kicking candidate to beat Taft and the more he thought about it the more convinced he became that the only man who would do was Eisenhower. So by mid-1949 Dewey began dropping in on Eisenhower for little chats every time the governor found himself in New York City.

"Beginning with the summer of 1949," Dewey told me, "I visited with General Eisenhower on occasion concerning the po-

litical situation and made it clear I thought his nomination in 1952 was imperative. Knowing his sense of duty, I never entertained any doubts that when he recognized the clear call, he would accept."

Dewey's decision to promote Eisenhower represented something of an about-face by the New York governor on the issue of whether a military man would make a good President. Perhaps it was the particular general involved or perhaps it was only what Willkie called "campaign oratory," but Dewey had opposed having a general for President in campaigning a year earlier in the Wisconsin primary where MacArthur was one of his rivals.

"If we are to continue leaving the affairs of the country in the hands of military men, we shall virtually confess that we cannot solve the problems of world peace by peaceful means," Dewey declared.

Eisenhower continued to exhibit an occupational deafness to Dewey's private urgings so the governor decided it was time he brought the matter out into the open. He announced on October 16, 1950, that the general was his candidate for the 1952 GOP nomination.

This was more than ordinarily significant since it confirmed Dewey's renunciation of a third nomination and put his successfully demonstrated convention technique behind the general.

Eisenhower was complimented and grateful but in an interview with Columbia University student-newspaper reporters he grumbled: "I don't know why people are always nagging me to run for President. I think I've gotten too old."

President Truman called Eisenhower back to active duty and on December 19, 1950, the Atlantic Pact countries put segments of their military forces under his command in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). This put a brake on political talk, but not for long.

By February, Eisenhower was back in Washington to report on the progress of NATO and to answer questions in Congress. In an unusual session of members of both Houses, held in the Library of Congress auditorium, Eisenhower stood alone at a microphone on

the stage and undertook to reply to all the questions of lawmakers banked in rising seats before him.

Some sharp-breaking curves were tossed at the general by the isolationists in the audience. But Eisenhower swung at all of them. To us perspiring newsmen, struggling on backstage telephones to keep a coherent account of the day's biggest news story running on the wires, the general's performance was rated as only a shade less than magnificent. He was at home in this field; he knew what he was talking about and he talked with a lucidity that was not always present in later presidential press-conference discussions.

It was obvious to all that Eisenhower had made an indelible impression on the members of Congress, many of whom would be delegates to the 1952 presidential nominating conventions. The remarkably frank answers from a man long trained to guard his tongue silenced many a potential critic. And Eisenhower made the internationalist element of the Republicans happy by opposing Taft's argument that the United States should not take the initiative in rearming Europe.

With this triumph behind him, Eisenhower returned to his Paris headquarters where he became a prize attraction for senators, House members, governors, and roving newspaper correspondents. The general's press-relations men were kept busy shuttling the visitors in and out. Each visitor came away with his own impression of Eisenhower's availability for political office.

While others talked and speculated, Dewey did something practical about making the general available for the political wars. Working with General Lucius D. Clay, one of Eisenhower's closest friends, Dewey organized an informal campaign to convince Republicans that Eisenhower was one of them.

Dewey and Clay dispatched Herbert Brownell, who had been Dewey's campaign manager and his chairman of the Republican National Committee, to lay out the lines among party organization workers. In July 1951 Brownell embarked on a long cross-country trip to feel the pulse of the people at the grass roots.

Brownell found that the people liked Ike. So did the party's customarily large financial contributors. This was no news to those of us who had been watching the build-up proceed. We long had

been convinced that Eisenhower would make a tremendously popular candidate—if anybody could get him to run.

Dewey knew the value of continuous publicity, not only upon the politicians but upon the potential candidate himself. He had a "hard sell" to make and Eisenhower wasn't going to be permitted to forget for a moment that a great many people wanted him to run for President. On the basis of Brownell's glowing reports, Dewey predicted publicly on October 15, 1951, that the general would be nominated on the Republican ticket and would be elected.

Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., Massachusetts Republican who was about to be beaten by Democrat John Kennedy in his bid for re-election, came out for Eisenhower.

There was one sour note in the Dewey-written symphony, however. Bernard M. Baruch, an old friend of the general's, said it would be a "disservice" to Eisenhower to inject him into the presidential contest.

But by this time Dewey had the bandwagon rolling. Ten days after Dewey made his own announcement, Mrs. Ogden Reid put the New York *Herald Tribune* behind Eisenhower for the nomination. Paul G. Hoffman, Senator Vandenberg's choice for the first foreign-aid administrator, joined the cause and Hugh D. Scott, Pennsylvania congressman and a former chairman of the GOP National Committee, enlisted for the duration.

Norman Chandler, publisher of the powerful Los Angeles *Times*, had made an early pilgrimage to Paris and had come away predicting Eisenhower would be a candidate. Roy Roberts, the politically acute publisher of the Kansas City *Star*, visited Eisenhower at his headquarters and wrote that Ike told him he was "a good Kansas Republican." That about wrapped up the argument over Eisenhower's party affiliation.

Through the winter, spring, and summer the Eisenhower snowball was rolling, unaffected by the changing readings of temperature and humidity. But when the yellowed leaves were falling in October, the general still was talking to visitors about "duty" but failing to rationalize this with the requirement that he run for the Republican presidential nomination.

Eisenhower came home for a talk with Truman. The relationship between the two men had grown more distant with each headline which suggested that Ike was about to let his name be entered in the contest for the Republican presidential nomination. Truman demonstrated, as he had before and was to do subsequently, that he liked everybody—except Republicans.

On November 6, 1951, after he had talked twice with Truman, Eisenhower still was being coy. The general told a news conference, in response to questions about his political future:

"If the time ever comes [when] I feel my duty compels me to say a word of any kind, I will do so positively and definitely. No one can be authorized to react for anyone. If I have friends who have been my friends for so long they believe they know how I would react, that is their business and I never interfere in their business."

We who were called upon to interpret this statement had no room to doubt that this man was a candidate, that Dewey had won his point. The general was saying, as Grant had before him, that if his friends wished to run him for President, he would have no objection.

Arthur Krock, the penetrating New York *Times* columnist, reported the next day after Eisenhower's conference with Truman that the Democratic President had offered to back the general for his party's nomination. But Krock wrote that Eisenhower had replied he could not support some of the labor and other domestic policies of the Democratic administration.

Truman was indignant in his denials of Krock's report of what happened and he chose to say that there was "not a word of truth" in Krock's story. Eisenhower had returned to Paris and there his never-sleep publicity men joined in the chorus. They said Krock's report of what transpired between the President and the general was "purely fictional."

At about this point one of the offbeat characters of American politics paid a short visit to Eisenhower's headquarters. George Bender, who had been elected as a Republican senator from Ohio, was enjoying one of the junkets that fall rarely to the junior members of the Senate.

George was a rollicking, rotund individual who could be the fourth man in anybody's quartet. One of his claims to fame was that he had rung the cowbell to stir the Taft forces into song, chant, and cheers at two Republican presidential nominating conventions. A more unlikely spy could hardly have been found by the Taft men.

When he reached the general's presence, Bender had a cute question already framed. Said he:

"General, is you is or is you ain't a candidate for the presidency and is you is or is you ain't a Republican?"

Even in his embryonic state of political education, Eisenhower recognized that one as loaded. He turned Bender off with a publicly unrecorded answer that gave the Ohioan no satisfaction.

The Taft forces were justifiably worried as they watched the clan beginning to rally around the Dewey dynamo. Senator James Duff of Pennsylvania was off barnstorming about the country, selling the Eisenhower bill of goods. A governor not widely known outside his own state of New Hampshire, Sherman Adams, had joined the crusade.

The list of governors who put themselves in the Eisenhower camp grew with the additions of Christian Herter of Massachusetts, John Lodge of Connecticut, Dan Thornton of Colorado, Arthur Langlie of Washington, and Douglas McKay of Oregon.

In vital and critical Michigan, National Committeeman Arthur Summerfield became a *sub rosa* member of the lodge. Wesley Roberts of Kansas was ready to devote his political talents to getting the general nominated. Arthur H. Vandenberg, Jr., lent the prestige of his father's name to the movement.

In New Jersey, Malcom Forbes, magazine publisher, formed an Eisenhower club. Behind all of these were men of wealth who kept their pocketbooks warm with frequent use.

But the Taft people were busy, too, and the Ohioan would be no pushover, as was disclosed by a poll of House of Representatives Republicans which showed seventy-one for Taft and fifty-four for Eisenhower.

Dewey and Clay had picked the handsome, elegant Senator Lodge to manage the campaign for the nomination. Lodge an-

nounced on January 6, 1952, that Eisenhower's name would be entered in the New Hampshire primary, first to be held in the nation. Both Lodge and Dewey had told Eisenhower that Truman would run again and only the general could beat him.

A day later there was no longer any doubt that Dewey had his candidate. It had taken the better part of eighteen months to convince the general and to prepare the public but both had been thoroughly conditioned when Eisenhower said on January 7 he would accept "a clear-cut call to political duty."

However, the general had been the victim of some enthusiastic overselling which left him with the idea that the nomination was his for the asking. No one was at hand to remind him that a man named Taft was geared for his last run for the prize and knew how to fight for it.

Eisenhower said he would not ask to be relieved from his NATO command to seek the nomination and "I shall not participate in the preconvention activities of others who may have such an intention with respect to me. . . ."

Shortly thereafter Eisenhower swept the New Hampshire primary and said that "by golly" he was proud of receiving so much support. On April 2, he wrote Secretary of Defense Robert A. Lovett asking for his release from his duties as NATO commander and Lovett replied that the release would be effective June 1.

Even at that point Eisenhower was saying, "I aspire to no public office in the United States and will only accept one out of a sense of duty."

Thomas E. Dewey had parlayed that sense of duty into a potential kingship by expert judgment of the man and of the times. But the king was yet to be crowned. A formidable challenger for the throne stood entrenched at the crossroads of the national party convention. Taft must be disposed of and the fighting would be bitter.

## 12 Television and “Fair Play”



*“Thou shalt not steal a nomination. . . . Thou shalt not steal from the people the birthright of the people to rule themselves.”—Theodore Roosevelt, 1912.*

*“When I say let’s clean out corruption, that . . . applies to political parties; it applies to primaries; and it applies to my native state of Texas. . . . In this case the rustlers stole the Texas birthright instead of Texas steers.”—Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1952.*

Theodore Roosevelt’s bombastic challenge to William Howard Taft in 1912 bounced its echo off the hills of time when Dwight D. Eisenhower cried “steal” against Robert A. Taft forty years later.

It was a surprised and chagrined Eisenhower who found himself, on his arrival home from a spangled existence as military commander of NATO, embroiled with Taft—a man with whom he had not agreed but for whom he had a profound respect—in a mud ball-throwing contest for the presidential nomination.

This was not according to the chapters of Hoyle which had been read to Eisenhower by Senator Lodge, with Dewey’s acquiescence. It had all seemed so simple in Paris; the American people were demanding him, voting for him in primaries. The return; the nomination; the election, all these were Q.E.D.

But here was that unbending, uncompromising fellow, Taft, standing challengingly in the pathway, ready for any kind of a fight. The general was at a personal loss to cope with this development and willing to accept the political experts’ advice.

This delighted the general’s advisers because they believed Brownell already had found the answer in Texas, where Eisenhower happened to have been born and where the Taft backers had been unbelievably stupid.

For as long as most individuals cared to remember, Colonel R.

B. Creager, who had challenged Willkie and Dewey at the 1940 convention, had been the sole proprietor of the Republican party in Texas. Creager and his colleagues had been surprised, and somewhat embarrassed by their success, when Herbert Hoover had carried Texas in 1928.

However, this was a minor misfortune, not likely to be repeated and not calculated to disturb the old guard control of the party there, despite some minor disagreements over patronage. The mission of the Creager forces for years had been to lose the state in the election but to remain in a position to collect the crumbs of patronage that fell from the national table, whether a Democrat or a Republican occupied the White House.

But Creager had died and the thirty-eight Republican convention votes of Texas were hanging more ripely on the limb than any of Taft's strategists appeared to realize. Quietly at first and then openly Brownell directed Eisenhower's backers toward organizing at the grass roots to pack precinct, county, and state conventions which influenced the choice of national convention delegates. Brazenly, the Eisenhower people invited Democrats to come into these Republican caucuses to vote for native-son Eisenhower's delegates.

Caught by surprise, Taft's men were outmaneuvered. They found themselves outnumbered by the unexpected attendance at what previously had been cozy little gatherings where the GOP faithful were rewarded with designation as delegates to the next highest convention.

So unprepared for these untoward happenings was Henry Zweifel, Taft's Texas manager, that he was forced into the desperate measure of walking out of a precinct meeting in his own home to hold a rump session in order to name some Taft delegates to his county's convention.

Anyone who chose, of course, could attend the precinct meetings. Eisenhower's backers said the Democrats who arrived at such caucuses appeared because they had become converts to the Republican cause and wished to see the general nominated. Taft's supporters said these were one-day Republicans who would be found voting the Democratic ticket in November as they usually

did. The Taft men contended these embryo Republicans were trying to influence the choice of a man who wasn't really a Republican as the GOP candidate.

Up to this point, it was a case of the pot calling the kettle black. But Taft's lieutenants made the mistake of taking matters into their own hands. In counties where the Eisenhower people had not been able to get their organization going in time, Taft's men controlled the delegations to the state convention which would choose the delegation to the national nominating convention. In these delegations the Taft supporters had the nucleus for an operation their opponents were to brand as a "steal."

Had he been less occupied elsewhere and less careless in the assumption that the well-worn party caretakers in the South could be relied upon to deliver as usual, Taft easily could have compromised the Texas battle with Brownell. But Taft left the direction of this faraway fight to unimaginative subordinates until they had wrecked any chance of compromise.

Taft's strategists had control of the Texas state-convention machinery so they manufactured contests for 500 of the 984 seats at the state meeting, representing a majority of the convention voting strength. Methodically, the Taft supporters turned away Eisenhower delegates and seated Taft men, many of the latter the choices of rump county conventions.

The result was that Zweifel was named to head a delegation to the party's national convention in Chicago that included thirty votes for Taft, four for Eisenhower, and four for General MacArthur. Jack Porter, the Eisenhower captain, headed a rival rump delegation with thirty-three votes for Eisenhower and five for Taft.

Capitalizing on this outcome, the Eisenhower forces exploded their "steal" charges and worked to exploit this issue nationally. In Detroit on June 14, Eisenhower personally got into the act—after an intensive briefing by Brownell—with an off-the-cuff attack on "corruption."

We newsmen who were traveling with the general had been furnished with an advance copy of a dull-as-dishwater speech. While we were conning it, James C. Hagerty, who had been

loaned to the general by Dewey as his press man, appeared in the press room of the Book-Cadillac Hotel to announce that we could throw away that text. The general would speak off the cuff, Haggerty said.

With a fervor we had not observed before, Eisenhower tore into "corruption," which the Republicans were saying at the time was the handmaiden of the Truman administration and representative of almost everything that went on in Washington under Democratic control.

But Eisenhower went further to whip out an indictment against the Taft forces that had maneuvered to corral the majority of the recognized Texas delegation. It was the first time the general, who had said he would not take part in the preconvention squabbling, had descended from the non-partisan level he had attempted to maintain. He was red-faced and more than usually vigorous as he declared:

"When I say let's clean out corruption, that . . . applies to political parties; it applies to primaries; and it applies to my native state of Texas."

From that point he mounted the attack. A week later Eisenhower was in Dallas, Texas, charging Taft's supporters with "a betrayal of the whole Republican party and its principles," though he himself might have been hard-put at that point to enumerate those principles.

The general said that the Taft men "deliberately and ruthlessly disenfranchised" the majority of those who voted for Eisenhower in precinct and county meetings.

"In this case," he said, "the rustlers stole the Texas birthright instead of Texas steers."

This indictment of Robert A. Taft for political theft strongly paralleled the tactics that Theodore Roosevelt had employed against William Howard Taft forty years earlier. Strangely enough the two Tafts, whose personal integrity never was seriously challenged, were defeated for the presidency by "steal" charges. The elder Taft gained the nomination but was beaten in the general election; the son failed to gain a nomination in his final bid for the country's highest office.

Written in the contrasts and parallels of the two Republican conventions, forty years apart, was embodied a testimonial of the power of public opinion. Win public opinion and you have all; lose it and you have nothing.

For little as they care about the vital preliminaries and little as they know of the technicalities involved, the American people now sit in en masse on conventions. They have been conditioned by television to believe that the good cowboy, mounted always on the white horse, always beats the villain. As the acute Brownell saw readily, success might lie with those who followed this script. All that was necessary was to mount Eisenhower on the white horse, cast Taft as the political "cattle rustler."

There had been no such nationwide opportunity for Roosevelt in 1912. But T.R. knew how to take advantage of the relatively limited resources of publicity then available and his "steal" charges against the elder Taft might have been as effective as Eisenhower's were against the younger Taft if there had been any way to usher the public behind the scenes of the 1912 Republican convention.

Roosevelt had delivered the nomination to Taft on a platter in 1908 and, before he had gone off around the world to shoot lions and hobnob with the crowned heads, he had instructed Taft on the method to glamorize himself with the voters.

"Hit them hard, old man," he told Taft. "Let the audience see you smile always, because I feel that your nature shines out so transparently when you do smile—you big, generous, high-minded fellow. Moreover, let them recognize the truth, which is that for all your generous nature there never existed a man who was a better fighter when the need arose."

The need arose rather quickly after Roosevelt returned from his world tour to the kind of a hero's welcome which had pointed Grant's thoughts toward a third-term try at the conclusion of a similar triumphant journey in 1879.

The historians will tell you that Taft's espousal of the notorious Payne-Aldrich tariff bill, his actions in a controversy over conservation of the nation's national resources, and his failure to win congressional acceptance of progressive legislation had estranged

the two old friends. The simpler answer seems to be that Roosevelt had loved being President and wanted to be again.

But T.R. only proved that they never come back. While he had been flitting about the world, the old pros he himself had trained and turned over to Taft had been doing their homework for the President. Their bagmen had paid the customary calls in the South, which held 278 of the convention nominating votes. Quietly the Taft men had solidified their hold on the state GOP political machines.

The fiery Roosevelt, however, still had a hold on the people as he demonstrated in the newfangled presidential primaries then just coming into vogue. In thirteen scattered state primaries, T.R. collected 278 of 382 available delegate votes while Taft got only 48 and others the remainder.

The fighting between the two old friends was lusty and bitter. In their campaigning they went about calling each other such names as "fathead," "apostate," and "demagogue."

At one point the beleaguered Taft cried out:

"Condemn me if you will, but condemn me by other witnesses than Theodore Roosevelt. I was a man of straw; but I have been a man of straw long enough. Every man who has blood in his body, and who has been misrepresented as I have . . . is forced to fight."

But the elder Taft could no more compete with the colorful Roosevelt in the presidential primaries than his son could compete with the attractive Eisenhower in similar popularity contests forty years later.

Because of this, the convention setting in 1912 paralleled that of 1952 in many respects. The elder Taft had gathered a formidable group of old pros about him. Among them were Elihu Root of New York, Boise Penrose of Pennsylvania, James E. Watson of Indiana, Murray Crain of Massachusetts, Williams Barnes, Jr., of New York, and Reed Smooth of Utah.

As they were to do four decades later, the Taft forces controlled the Republican National Committee which would certify the temporary roll of delegates to the national convention. While the convention itself eventually would decide which contesting delegations were to be seated, there was in 1912 nothing to prevent

those who had been certified temporarily by the National Committee from voting on any issue that arose in the convention.

It was obvious that the reliance of both Tafts on this mechanical arrangement contributed heavily to their defeats, one in the general election and the other in the convention itself. Neither Taft ever seemed to be able to recognize that in politics psychology often outweighs mere preliminary voting strength.

When the National Committee met ten days before the 1912 convention, Taft's forces could count on the votes of thirty-seven of the fifty-three members, although the thirty-seven included fifteen who had been defeated for re-election in their own states and would be retired as soon as the convention got around to naming a new national committee.

But the Taft men were brazen and secure in the knowledge that public opinion of the day would be unlikely to catch up with their maneuvers. Lame ducks Penrose and Crain pulled the strings as the committee elevated another lame duck, Victor Rosewater of Nebraska, to its vacant chairmanship.

The Roosevelt men could do little but scream protests against these actions and, unlike 1952, their protests would not be heard afar. But they evolved the strategy which Brownell, Dewey, and Lodge were to follow forty years later of setting up some legitimate delegate contests and trumping up some others. If chicanery was to be the order of the day, it would not be an entirely one-sided affair—as, indeed, it was not in 1952.

The Taft-dominated National Committee, meeting behind closed doors, proceeded to ride roughshod over the Rough Rider's supporters. It handed Taft 233 contested delegate votes to Roosevelt's six.

To be sure the newspaper headlines blazoned indignation at the "steam-roller" tactics but the Taft men were unperturbed, confident of the general public's apathy. Their work would be all done, the verdict sealed and delivered before public opinion could make itself felt.

Just as Eisenhower's backers were to do forty years later, Roosevelt's supporters pounded away on the theme that Taft couldn't be elected. While some of Taft's men were willing to concede this

point, they regarded continuing control of the party machinery as a larger stake.

The Chicago *Tribune* quoted Kansas National Committeeman Mulvane as replying to questions on this point:

"We can't elect Taft, but we are going to hold on to this organization and when we get back four years from now we will have it, and not those damned insurgents."

Given this volatile situation, Roosevelt rode personally into Chicago with roars that might have startled some of the lions he had been hunting in Africa. Melodramatically, he threw off this political production in condemning the Taft men's tactics:

"Thou shalt not steal a nomination. . . . Thou shalt not steal from the people the birthright of the people to rule themselves."

Typically, Roosevelt had tossed tradition overboard by barging into Chicago for the convention; it was something presidential aspirants didn't do in those days.

His eyeglasses glinting, his dry, sandy hair matted down on his square head, T.R. thumped his chest on his arrival and announced to inquiring reporters: "I feel like a bull moose."

The Taft men, however, had their blunderbusses ready.

As chairman of the National Committee, Rosewater called the convention to order and gaveled down all attempts to bring up the question of passing on the temporary roll of delegates. By then the Roosevelt backers had trimmed their sails and were challenging the seating of only seventy-four Taft delegates.

The National Committee had picked Root for temporary chairman of the convention. Insurgents backing Roosevelt got behind Governor Francis E. McGovern of Wisconsin, hoping thus to swing in their direction the delegates who were supporting Senator Robert M. LaFollette for the presidential nomination. With the seventy-four contested delegates voting, Root was elected 558 to 501.

With his vest buttoned up tight below his high, stiff collar, Root marched in the June heat to a seat behind a small, rectangular table on the convention floor and took over. His stiff, white mustache bristling defiance to the Roosevelt insurgents, Root per-

emptorily overrode protests against the seating of the seventy-four Taft delegates.

Then he made the ruling that was to become the crux of the battle between Eisenhower and the younger Taft for the 1952 nomination. Root held that contested delegates could not vote on their own seating but could vote on the seating of other contested delegates. This ruling stood for forty years but in 1952 Eisenhower's men said this was not "fair play."

With the vote of the seventy-four contested Taft delegates again proving decisive, the 1912 convention upheld Root's ruling by a count of 567 to 507.

Boyishly handsome Governor Herbert Hadley of Missouri, supporting Roosevelt, stormed that the convention was, in effect, permitting the thirty-seven members of the National Committee who had voted originally to seat these seventy-four delegates to pick the party's nominee. Henry J. Allen of Kansas announced a Roosevelt sit-down strike; the soon-to-become Bull Moose delegates would remain in the convention but would take no further part in the proceedings. Hadley might have been a compromise choice but the conflict had gone too far to be ended by a settlement.

Warren G. Harding of Ohio got up then to place Taft's name in nomination with a fatuous speech praising the President as a great progressive.

With Roosevelt's backers generally declining to take part, Taft was renominated by 561 votes to Roosevelt's 107, with 349 delegates not voting and the remainder distributing their support among minor candidates. The old guard had its caretaker candidate; whatever happened in November, it would be back in 1916 to run the Republican convention show once again.

When the convention had concluded its work, Roosevelt's followers marched to a rally where the groundwork was laid for the Bull Moose Progressive party which shortly thereafter nominated T.R. for President and Hiram W. Johnson of California for Vice-President.

In the campaign that followed, it quickly became apparent that the President was not a contender. Roosevelt pranced about the

country conducting what Harry Truman later was to epitomize as a "give 'em hell" campaign, and despite the split among the Republicans, Woodrow Wilson despaired at times of overhauling Roosevelt's popularity with the voters.

"He appeals to their imagination; I do not," Wilson said at one point. "He is a real, vivid person, whom they have seen and shouted themselves hoarse over and voted for, millions strong; I am a vague, conjectural personality, more made up of opinions and academic prepossessions than of human traits and red corpuscles."

Undoubtedly the professor from Princeton owed his election to those who had rigged the Republican convention and thus had forced Roosevelt to run as the nominee of a third party. Although Wilson got 435 electoral votes to Roosevelt's eighty-eight and Taft's eight, the Democratic candidate had three million fewer popular votes than the total run up by his two opponents.

One of the mistakes of the 1912 convention—Root's ruling that contested delegates could vote on the seating of others whose credentials were challenged—lived on to contribute in 1952 to denying the Republican nomination, and a chance at the presidency, to Robert Alfonso Taft.

If years of preparation counted, the younger Taft was ready for the presidency and much better qualified for it than his father, even after the latter had held the office. Bob Taft had what his father lacked, a whiplash brain trained to arrive swiftly at the core of any problem. By thinking circles around most of his political colleagues, Taft had skyrocketed to undisputed leadership among Republicans in the Senate in an unprecedented brief span of time. He overshadowed defeated presidential candidate Dewey as spokesman for his party and became, in the eyes of many, "Mr. Republican."

Whether Taft's policies were acceptable to a majority of Americans never was tested. There was little doubt, however, that he lacked the ability of either of the Roosevelts or of Eisenhower to warm and charm the mass of the people. His supporters swore by him but his apparently more numerous critics—including labor's powerful leaders—swore at him. Nowhere, however, was there

lack of respect for the ability of the tall, somewhat paunchy senator from Ohio whose high forehead, wispy hair, rimless glasses, and toothy smile made a familiar picture on the nation's television screens.

Taft aspired to the presidency about as long and with as little success as Henry Clay and Daniel Webster. The Ohioan began his quest for the nomination in 1936 as the favorite son of his state. His strong bid for the prize was turned back by Willkie in 1940. In a gentleman's agreement with then Governor John Bricker of Ohio, Taft stepped aside in 1944. In 1948 he pursued Dewey down to the convention wire and lost again. The 1952 attempt was to be the last chapter for Taft and matters were going badly for him at convention time.

While Taft had resisted the impulse to blast publicly at Eisenhower, he made it apparent to those of us who talked with him daily that he felt the general knew almost nothing about government and had few qualifications for the presidency. Taft was well aware of the part that Dewey was playing in getting the general into the nomination contest, even though at that time only the cap of the iceberg effort showed on the surface.

Dewey was an old and respected enemy who, in Taft's reasoning, had had two chances for the presidency, had muffed them, and now ought to get out of the way. Taft was perfectly convinced that the internationalists of the party had demonstrated they couldn't beat the Democrats; now it was time to try an orthodox Republican.

Taft was thoroughly irked by the "can't win" chant being raised against him by Dewey and his associates. The Ohio senator regarded this as unfair and his exasperation with these tactics undoubtedly contributed to his decision to let down the bars toward the kind of retaliatory measures that led to his stalking blindly into the bear trap that had been laid for him in Texas.

When the two contesting Texas delegations reached Chicago, the stage was set for a replay of the drama of 1912. There was a change in the cast of characters, it was true, but the setting was the same. As it had forty years before, the first scene opened with

the Taft-controlled Republican National Committee sitting in prejudiced judgment on delegate contests.

However, a new medium of communications, television, was knocking insistently on the committee's closed doors. When the committee voted to bar television and newsmen from its hearings it cast a cloud of suspicion over its operations.

With something of the public-be-damned attitude of the 1912 members, a majority of the committee proceeded to go down the line for Taft. Following the Ohio senator's informal recommendations, members divided Texas's votes twenty-two for Taft and sixteen for Eisenhower. They then settled contests in six other states by giving Taft forty-three votes and Eisenhower two.

Under the 1912 rules and with a co-operating presiding officer such as Root had been, these delegates might have given Taft the nomination. But the Eisenhower strategists were ready for a direct appeal to the convention itself, which must decide finally on the seating of its permanent delegates.

The general's supporters had a powerful new weapon and they managed to use it to their advantage. The wooden curtain that had shielded 1912's wheeling and dealing had given way to one of glass. Now voters by the millions could watch not only what took place on the convention floor but the curious shenanigans that went on in many caucuses and committee meetings.

This was the year of television's big convention show and it was a fascinating one, better than a ball game or a fight, for millions who had never seen a political drama of this kind. If many of the viewers weren't sure just what was going on at all times, they were quick to respond emotionally to any suggestion that there might be fraud in the proceedings.

This very circumstance contributed heavily to 1952's results; the response from future television audiences would be less emotional and less influential. Four years later the kind of convention drama that got top rating in 1952 would be more likely to be greeted with a yawn and a flick of the dial to a western horse opera. It did not take viewers long to learn how dull and dry most political speeches can be nor how lackluster can be the staged demonstrations.

Brownell and his political crewmen had done their work well

in the hinterlands. By the time the National Committee had acted, a blizzard of telegrams had fallen on the arriving convention delegates echoing the "fair play" demands being trumpeted by the Eisenhower forces.

Guy George Gabrielson, old-guard chairman of the National Committee and a Taft man, promised in opening the first session that "this will be a fair convention." Then, in direct reference to 1912, he said:

"The only steam roller in this amphitheater will be the determined will of the 1206 delegates."

As if to emphasize the fact that the convention machinery belonged to Taft, Eisenhower's supporters let Walter S. Hallanan, another of the senator's backers, be named temporary chairman without a fight.

Eisenhower's men were biding their time and they exploded the fireworks when Senator Bricker came forward to move, amid applause and boos, that the convention adopt the rules of its 1948 predecessor. This would have involved approval of Root's 1912 ruling.

Governor Arthur V. Langlie of Washington popped up to propose a "fair play" amendment to the rules. Under it no delegate who had been seated temporarily by less than two-thirds approval of the National Committee could vote in any contest before the convention—his own or any other's. With the nation looking on intently by television, Langlie's proposal was received with mixed booing and applause.

This had all the makings of a TV spectacular and the customers went out to the kitchen for a cold beer while they waited for the forces of Taft—already being cast by circumstances as the villain in the piece—to come up with their next move.

Representative Clarence Brown of Ohio, a political infighter of no mean proportions, waddled up to the platform to deliver the Taft counterpunch. The convention was in such roaring confusion that Gabrielson had to call again and again for the sergeants at arms to clear the aisles.

When Brown could be heard, he led off with a blast at the "mob psychology" he said was being invoked against Taft. But Brown's

timing was off; his footwork was bad, and his punches were not sharp. Instead of slugging, he chose to box, feinting with a motion to amend the Langlie proposal.

Brown proposed that the convention exempt from Langlie's motion seven district delegates selected in Louisiana—five of them for Taft and two for Eisenhower—whose seating he said was a state matter in which the national convention had no authority.

Brown's was a shrewd effort to get from the convention at the beginning a favorable vote—any kind of a favorable vote—for a Taft proposal. If he had succeeded, the viewers at home would have been confused and their otherwise clear vision of Taft as the villain might have been clouded. The same sort of psychology also would have affected the convention's voting delegates.

But the Eisenhower "fair play" campaign was beginning to pay off in an even heavier deluge of messages from the grass roots. The delegates, knowing that the country was watching them, voted down Brown's proposal 658 to 548 and thus forecast the rejection of Taft's bid for the presidential nomination.

When Langlie's motion was adopted on a voice vote, the forty-year-old ruling of Elihu Root was tossed into the ash can.

To most of us recording play-by-play accounts of this drama in the comfort of an air-conditioned hall, the battle seemed all but over. But like Lee after Gettysburg, the Taft forces continued to fight. They controlled the convention's Credentials Committee, which must do a retake on the delegate contests. There still was a chance for a compromise and Taft took a personal hand in efforts to work out one.

When the credentials group assembled the next morning, its leaders were missing. The 500 spectators who had gathered in the ballroom of Chicago's Congress Hotel milled about impatiently as nothing happened. Suddenly, from behind a partition at the far side of the room, Taft and several other convention officials filed out. Unsmilingly, Taft told reporters there would be no compromise.

Unlike the National Committee, the credentials group had decided on open hearings, and television and newsreel cameras were lined up near the crowded press tables. At this point the

Eisenhower strategists launched a sudden new attack with the demand that not only the hearings but the committee's deliberations be beamed on the air. Always in the past the committee had retired behind closed doors to discuss and vote on the contests but delegate George Faul of Iowa jumped up to propose that all secrecy be abandoned. The Eisenhower forces were trying to cut off the last avenue of compromise.

With the unwinking red eyes of the television cameras upon him, Congressman Brown was forced into the unfavorable position of seeking secrecy.

"We can't discuss these things freely among ourselves unless we are in executive session," he argued.

"My people expect these decisions to be reached openly," Faul retorted tartly. "They are fed up with these things being decided in star chamber proceedings. Let's come out in the open."

The vote of the Credentials Committee to conduct its deliberations before the cameras and with the press at hand drove another nail in the coffin of Taft's chances of winning the nomination. Step by step the image was being formed of a candidate who preferred to connive behind doors, who had something to fear in the open, who did not want "fair play" to prevail.

In a thirteen-hour session the Credentials Committee decided six contests just as the National Committee had previously. In a seventh contest, Taft's backers, now awakened to their peril, made a dramatic effort to counter the charge of John Minor Wisdom, an Eisenhower supporter, that the Ohio senator's group had "stolen" the Louisiana delegate elections.

With the television cameras on him, Eugene Worrell of Virginia, a Taft supporter, arose to propose in the name of "fair play" that thirteen Eisenhower delegates replace thirteen Taft delegates on the fifteen-member group from Louisiana. Brown agreed to go along with this in the name of "unity."

But the Taft men stuck to their guns in the Texas contest. They could ill afford to give away thirteen Louisiana votes even to demonstrate they could be fair, too. They knew that to let Eisenhower have the bulk of the Texas delegation meant Taft's defeat for the nomination. They would have to chance a floor fight now

that they had some ammunition, small in amount as it was, to counter the "steal" charges that would be fired at them.

By a vote of twenty-seven to twenty-four the Credentials Committee had divided the Texas delegation, just as had the National Committee before it, with twenty-two votes for Taft and sixteen for Eisenhower.

When the issue went to the convention floor, the adroit Eisenhower strategists forced a test on the seating of a Georgia delegation pledged to Taft. The prize was Texas, but the vote would come on the Credentials Committee's approval of the Taft Georgia delegates.

These were the last desperate hours for Taft and the bitterness that spewed out among the alternately booing and applauding delegates left its acrid imprint on the party long after. The bristling climax came when Senator Everett Dirksen of Illinois, tall, thick-chested, wavy-haired supporter of Taft, mounted the rostrum to plead for approval of the Georgia Taft delegates. Dirksen was responding to an urgent message from Taft, who sensed the trend was going against him.

With chameleon-like ability, Dirksen had been first an isolationist, then an internationalist, and subsequently had swung toward the kind of nationalism that Taft was advocating. This night he was all for Taft, as he made it quite clear in one of those unctuous-voiced speeches in which he was capable of frying his opposition.

Pleading with the convention not to "impeach" the decision of its own Credentials Committee, Dirksen precipitated a near-riot when he leveled a finger at Dewey, sitting with the New York delegation, and declared, "We followed you before and you took us down the path to defeat." Roundly booed by the Taftites, Dewey arose and bowed mockingly to them but made no reply.

In the thunderous disorder that resulted, Hallanan had to call on the sergeants at arms to get the shouting delegates back in their seats. Dirksen himself finally got a semblance of order with the shouted admonition, "This is no place for Republicans to be booing other Republicans."

All of this was to be remembered more than six years later when

Dirksen, who then had become a top-ranking supporter of Eisenhower's legislative programs, would succeed Senator Knowland as the Republican leader of the Senate. Eisenhower could forgive and forget, even if Dewey couldn't.

Dewey had his 1952 nominee when the Georgia issue came to a vote and the Taft forces were defeated 607 to 531. There was no mistaking the outcome when Texas went by the boards to Eisenhower.

The Taft forces were in retreat when Ernest Palmer, one of their delegates from Iowa, arose to say there had been enough arguing and debating and "it is time we got down to the real business of this convention, the selection of our nominee." On his motion the Eisenhower Texas delegation was seated on a voice vote.

"Fair play" had won out. The show, of course, would go on through its multiple nominating speeches and noisy demonstrations but Taft's chances for the nomination were done for.

However, Taft himself would not give up. He clung to the hope that Eisenhower would fall short of the nomination on the first ballot and thus leave room for some kind of deal by which he could defeat the general.

Down in the bowels of the convention hall, white-haired Victor A. Johnston, one of the shrewdest of the political old pros, sat at a telephone connected to Taft's desk in the senator's hotel suite. Johnston had kept Taft informed of every small development while the presidential balloting got under way.

As the voting proceeded, the light on the telephone winked and Johnston lifted the receiver.

"Vic," Taft said, "I wish you would go to Senator Knowland and tell him I'd like to talk to him after the first ballot is over. Maybe we can work something out."

Johnston hurried to the California delegation and conferred briefly with Knowland. Returning to the cubbyhole, he lifted the phone and told Taft, when the latter answered:

"Knowland says there isn't going to be any second ballot."

For the first time Taft acknowledged final defeat. He himself

knew by now the general would win the prize on the first ballot then approaching its climax.

Beyond the convention victory, however, lay the uncertainties of a presidential campaign which the opposition had grown monotonously accustomed to winning in two decades. And the Democrats were calling up a new and challenging figure.

## 13 The Genuine Draft



A blisteringly hot sun beat down on the outer edges of the cement-floored patio. Curling waves of humidity drifted up from the deserted swimming pool. It was the kind of a June day Houston, Texas, shrugs off as almost inevitable.

Adlai E. Stevenson and I sat in the brief shade of the patio, outside the air-conditioned dimness of the lavish Shamrock Hotel. It was almost the only place that the harassed governor of Illinois could find for a quiet, uninterrupted discussion.

Stevenson's summer suit was as rumpled as his ample brow was furrowed. His blue eyes popped with intensity as he said, in as many ways as he found it possible to, that he didn't want to run for President of the United States. Row on orderly row, he marshaled the arguments why he should not embark on any such adventure.

There was no doubting this man's warm and obvious sincerity as he pointed out, with the precision for which he was noted, that he was completing a four-year term as governor and didn't feel he had finished the job he had set out to do. He was confident, he said, he could be re-elected governor. Moreover, it was a job he liked, one that he was beginning really to get his teeth into. And he felt that Illinois would suffer if Republican William G. Stratton took over the governor's chair. Beyond that, Stevenson knew something about the terrible burden of the presidency and he had some natural doubts as to his fitness for the office.

Besides, he said, tossing his partly bald head and easing his paunchy frame back into a deck chair, he didn't want to run against Eisenhower. Taft, yes; he would relish a contest with the Ohio senator. He was against the things Taft stood for and he was for the things Taft opposed. As another point, Taft could be beaten, and rather easily, he thought.

But Eisenhower was another horse.

"As I know them, I don't see anything wrong with Eisenhower's views on foreign policy and that is the important thing now," Stevenson said. "That overshadows everything else and as far as I can determine both he and I are on the internationalist side."

Eisenhower was a great popular hero, he went on. If the Republicans nominated him, he would be difficult for any Democrat to defeat. Then, turning to me, he said:

"Do you think the Republicans will nominate the general?"

I replied that I did, adding that while Taft would have great strength in the GOP convention the conservatives in recent times had not been able to put over their man. Eisenhower had a popular swing going, I observed, which was convincing a great many Republicans he could win where Taft could not.

Sighing, Stevenson mopped his dripping brow and, turning to me, said:

"Jack, you've been around this political business for a long time. What is your honest opinion? Is there any way I can avoid this nomination?"

"Well," I replied, "you could 'Shermanize' yourself."

"Oh no," he answered quickly, "I couldn't do that. I have too much respect for the presidency ever to presume to say that I wouldn't accept if nominated and wouldn't serve if elected. No, I couldn't do that."

"In that case," I said, "I think you're going to be the Democratic nominee. You are the logical man—a young governor elected to clean house in an important state, a good speaker, and, as your tremendous majority in your election as governor showed, a good campaigner. The Democrats are looking for a new broom and, in my judgment, you're it."

"Well," he sighed again, "I suppose you may be right. It may be as inevitable as you think it is. I hope not."

The annual governors' conference was under way in the Shamrock and while Stevenson and I chatted on the overwarm patio, Governor Thomas E. Dewey of New York was making hay for the Eisenhower cause in a plush, air-conditioned suite upstairs. There Dewey was receiving his gubernatorial colleagues and enlisting their support for a "fair play" resolution which would strike a body

blow at Taft's ambitions and help promote Eisenhower into the Republican nomination.

By this time Eisenhower had come around, and those who recognized the signs could sense that he would be the Republican nominee. But the Democratic presidential picture was askew, largely because Stevenson, in June, was proving as reluctant to run as Eisenhower had been several months earlier.

Stevenson had said time and again that he only wanted to run for re-election as governor and wouldn't the president-makers please leave him alone. Since I had been among the first to forecast that he would be the 1952 Democratic nominee and since I refused to retreat from this position, Stevenson took some special pains to try to convince me that he would not make the race.

Under date of June 13, 1952, he had written me that he had given a great deal of thought to making a further statement disassociating himself from the campaign that was being made to win him the nomination.

"On the other hand," he wrote, "I am very loathe to say words which might be construed as demeaning or deprecating the most important office on earth. I am quite sincere in my efforts to discourage the draft movement, because I know this is the job [governor of Illinois] I want and feel that I can do. Moreover, I feel deeply committed to do it because of the many people who have given me their help and support."

On the basis of previous conversations, I had asked him if he were delaying a statement of his intentions until the Republicans had chosen their nominee.

"I am not now, nor have I at any time, been waiting around to pick my opponent," he replied.

While this was true in the literal sense, it was perfectly obvious that if Taft had been the GOP nominee Stevenson would have viewed the possibility of his own nomination on the national ticket with fewer misgivings than he did his eventual acceptance of the nomination to oppose Eisenhower.

This is not to say that Stevenson feared defeat or would have avoided a battle merely because he felt he would be unsuccessful. It is merely to say that at that particular time Stevenson, like a

great many other Americans, believed Eisenhower was well qualified for the presidency and would carry on the internationalist tradition in foreign policy.

If he soon was to change his ideas about Eisenhower's philosophy of government, that in itself was about as inevitable as Stevenson's nomination for the presidency appeared to me, at least, on that sultry, hot day in Houston.

Stevenson had been kept busily engaged in waving aside suggestions that he might be drafted as the Democratic standard-bearer. Although his practical political experience had been limited largely to his campaign, election, and administration as governor, Stevenson shared the wise politicians' knowledge that most drafts are phony contrivances.

"I can hardly believe, in all the circumstances, that a genuine draft is possible, and I hope very much that it does not develop," he had written me.

But it seemed that 1952 was the year in which men who didn't want to run for the presidency were persuaded to make the race. The developments that led to the nomination of Stevenson, a relative unknown, by the Democrats are worth reviewing, not only because they represented the nearest modern approach to a genuine draft but also because Stevenson obviously remained politically available even after two presidential-contest defeats.

When Adlai Stevenson received the navy's top award for wartime service in 1945 he was so little known that a Washington newspaper mistakenly printed in connection with the story a picture of his paternal grandfather, Adlai E. Stevenson, who was Vice-President in Grover Cleveland's administration. This, mind you, was only seven years before 27,314,922 Americans—more than had voted for Roosevelt in any year except 1936—stamped their approval of Stevenson for President.

Stevenson had served as a lawyer in the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) under Henry Wallace and had transferred to the Federal Alcohol Control Administration (FACA) in the early days of the New Deal. Subsequently in Chicago he had become a civic leader with strong internationalist views.

Five months before the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, Ste-

venson became personal assistant to Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox. Roosevelt had borrowed Knox's bright young man for an economic survey of Sicily and Italy in 1944 and thereafter Stevenson had served as a member of a board which analyzed the results of strategic bombing in Europe.

Although there had been some vague talk about the possibility that he might become a Democratic candidate for the United States Senate from Illinois, we political writers were hardly conscious of his existence until he came on stage in a curious way at the 1945 United Nations organization conference in San Francisco.

The American delegation to the conference was headed by Secretary of State Stettinius, whose inexperience showed quickly through the handsome façade he presented to the world. The delegation was replete with prima donnas, including waspish Senator Tom Connally of Texas, polemic Senator Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan, and eagerly ambitious Harold E. Stassen, the former governor of Minnesota.

All of the American delegates were jealous of their prerogatives, and co-ordination of their activities was considerably less than might have been desirable. To add to these difficulties, the State Department had sent an uninspired foreign-service officer, who was wholly inexperienced in dealing with reporters, to head up the press section of the U.S. delegation.

All of these factors totaled a dearth of news about the American delegation's activities and the problems its members were facing in the closed sessions of the conference, where the Russians were giving negative answers to almost all of the proposals. The diplomatic reporters, with contacts among the foreign delegations, fared better than we journeymen newspapermen whose contacts were limited to the American officials. The British and some other delegations held daily briefings for their newsmen. For a time we frustrated Americans were learning about the latest conference developments in stories relayed back to us from London and other world capitals.

Connally talked guardedly to reporters, as did Vandenberg, but each was careful not to impinge on the other's field of operations. Stassen was so busy leaping from conference crag to crag that he

was almost impossible to interview. Representative Sol Bloom of New York, another delegate, was intrigued by the social functions to which he was being invited and knew little of what was going on behind the closed doors.

At that point we working reporters encountered what we considered, at the time, the final rebuff. We were informed by State Department officials that, since there had been so many "leaks," we would be barred from the top floor of the Fairmount Hotel, where the American delegation had its quarters. In a body we marched to the top floor, passed the State Department guards, and knocked on the door where the U.S. delegation was having a conference. When Vandenberg answered the knock, as spokesman I announced that we reporters had come up to be thrown out and when did the ejection start. Vandenberg was immediately conciliatory and the order barring us was withdrawn promptly. But that left us in no better position to try to report to the American people what their representatives were doing and saying in the closed meetings.

Into this befouled situation Stevenson was dispatched hurriedly by the State Department. He had been appointed a special assistant to Stettinius a few weeks earlier to work with poet Archibald MacLeish on a program to educate the public about the department's operations. The department decided belatedly the public needed quite a bit of education about what was going on in San Francisco.

Stevenson was not a newspaperman in the full sense, although he had spent a couple of years as editor of the Bloomington, Illinois *Pantagraph* and had joined in an unsuccessful effort to buy the Chicago *Daily News*. But he had had a great deal of experience in dealing with human nature and, given full authority, he acted quickly.

Stevenson surveyed the situation, talked to a number of reporters, and within a matter of hours had set up what was promptly dubbed the "leak" room in the Fairmount Hotel. Here reporters could go in the morning and again in the afternoon to get accurate, firsthand reports from trained diplomatic career men on what was said and done at the conference's closed meetings. If

Tom Connally teed off on the "pseudo-Arabians," as he did on one occasion, we got the quotes on what he had said about the Saudis.

Armed with this information, a chosen few could drift unostentatiously into the nearby combined living quarters and office of John Foster Dulles, the delegation's principal adviser, for an interpretation of what lay behind the surface happenings. Dulles and Stevenson, who were to have their differences later, worked closely together in this instance.

Stevenson's unusual activities in this field not only served to broaden his political acquaintances but to demonstrate, in a small way, the fallacy of later contentions that he lacked the capacity for quick and decisive action. None of us had any thought at this time that within three years this soft-spoken intellectual would be elected governor of Illinois by a record-smashing majority of 572,067 votes.

The Stevenson that we came to know intimately didn't fit the pattern of politicians with whom we were familiar. He was, among other things, articulate in a lyrical sort of way, and the number of politicians who were coherent, not to mention lyrical, was limited. We quickly discovered that Stevenson was a craftsman with words—his own words, for a change. He was friendly and seemingly gregarious, yet he was shy and at times a lonely man whose thoughts were far, far away.

About Stevenson there was nothing brash or spectacular, as we had been led to believe all successful politicians must be. This, of course, was because he was no politician in the accepted sense. He was, as he himself was to say later, an egghead—a man whose intellectual powers often outran the ability of the people to assimilate his thinking.

Whether Stevenson was a good governor of Illinois naturally remained a matter of political controversy. But the testimony was incontrovertible that, whatever they thought of his administration, the Democrats of Illinois wanted him to run again for governor. There was no doubt in the minds of these practical politicians that the man they had accepted with misgivings in his first contest had by his performance made himself nearly indispensable to their state ticket in 1952.

There had been a time in 1948 when the question of whether Stevenson would run for the Senate or for governor had teetered on the brink. There was in Illinois Democratic circles at this time another personality who was receiving attention. He was Paul Douglas, a professor of economics, a twice-wounded ex-marine and a former Chicago city councilman who had made a deep imprint on the intellectuals to whom Stevenson also appealed.

At first the talk was of Stevenson for the Senate and Douglas for governor. But all of this was switched by the political pros of the party. Stevenson was not well-enough known to be elected to the Senate, they reasoned. Douglas probably could be elected governor but it would be better to use his name in the Senate race and depend on the Democratic machine to deliver the governorship to Stevenson.

As it turned out, the regime of Republican Governor Dwight Green had provided the Democrats with all of the ammunition they needed to elect a ticket on the issue of cleaning up the graft in Illinois. So Stevenson became governor—and immediately a possibility for the party's presidential nomination—while Douglas went to the Senate from which the parties seldom have chosen a presidential candidate.

If this seems ironical, take the specific case of Stevenson and Douglas and apply it to any aspirant for the presidency. As governor, Stevenson had only to compile a reasonably good record to have it said that he was a good administrator of the type of whom Presidents are made.

Douglas, on the other hand, could display no record of administrative decision or accomplishment. Instead, he was pegged down on every national issue on which he voted. Stevenson might say in a general way that he was for expanding civil rights, continuing the reciprocal-trade agreements program, or increasing benefit payments to the farmers. But Douglas had to vote in the Senate on dozens of variations of these issues, with the special interests looking at each ballot he cast and marking him up for future opposition if he disagreed with them.

The process is one in which few senators have found any sure footing toward the political stars. Before they have even begun to

run seriously for the presidential nomination, their every mood has been recorded for the voters. Governors, on the other hand, could remain aloof from this sort of countdown and thus be less objectionable to any particular segment of the voting population.

As governor of Illinois, Stevenson had remained uncommitted on many national issues and therefore was attractive as a possible presidential candidate. Although there had been speculation for months about his availability for national office, the Stevenson draft actually got under way only when President Truman asked the Illinois governor to the White House on January 20, 1952, to discuss the matter. The resultant conference between the tough-minded old pro, Truman, and the still starry-eyed amateur, Stevenson, was one for the history books.

Truman spoke directly and forcefully about what was on his mind. He wanted Stevenson to go out after the nomination because, among other things, Truman didn't believe that Eisenhower would run. Furthermore, the President said the country wouldn't take another general.

While the fascinated Stevenson listened in silence, with only a murmured "yes" or "no," Truman outlined his strategy. The President, Truman said, could maneuver the nominating convention from the White House. When it became known that he wanted Stevenson, there would be no effective opposition; the nomination would be in the bag.

Truman was probably the most amazed man on earth when Stevenson said "no." In Truman's book, this could not happen; no man who was offered the presidential nomination could sit across the table from him and say, with a deeply furrowed brow, that he did not believe he was capable of taking on the responsibility and, besides, he didn't really want to run for the office.

This was in an era when Truman still was getting political mileage out of his 1948 victory. The President felt, with some justification, that whenever the Democrats fought for it for all they were worth, they could win the presidency; and Truman could recognize no higher reward on earth.

But Stevenson was of no such mind. Adamantly he replied he had announced his candidacy for re-election as governor; he had

made promises and commitments he could not wash out. With a rounded sense of proportion that was somewhat foreign to Truman, Stevenson said he wanted to finish a job he had started. Besides that, the governor said, he wasn't really qualified to be President; he was grateful but, no, he couldn't do it.

Truman was taken aback but he recognized in the disclaimers of the man who sat before him some of the same gnawing doubts that beset him when Roosevelt had died and he had been plunged into the world's toughest job. But Truman knew he had learned his job and he had little patience with a man who wasn't even willing to expose himself to presidential responsibilities.

Stevenson went away from this White House conference troubled but determined to stand his ground. He would simply reiterate his intention of running for governor and eventually, like all other things, this foolishness about his running for President would pass away. However, the drive to get him into the race was proving difficult to halt without seeming to deprecate the office of President.

Stevenson was determined not to be trapped into some statement intimating he felt the presidency was not worth the political candle. He felt a deep reverence for the office and for some of the men who had held it. He demonstrated this after he was nominated by secretly visiting Lincoln's home in Springfield one day. There he sat, as a humble man, thinking quietly for an hour of the glory and responsibility that had come to the Great Emancipator. And he wondered what he might do in the face of twentieth-century problems that dwarfed the ones of Lincoln's day.

With Stevenson continuing his evasive tactics, a Stevenson-for-President committee began preconvention operations in Illinois, and voluntary support began popping up all over the country. The inevitable was beginning to close in upon this reluctant man.

Because he had promised Truman to think the matter over further, although he had said he would not be a candidate for the nomination, Stevenson went back secretly to the White House on March 12 to tell the President it was his final decision that he would not run. The popular version was that Truman was disgusted with his potential protégé, but this was not true. In fact,

the two men spent four companionable hours together, ranging the world in their discussions.

The intimate knowledge Stevenson displayed of conditions in every sector of the globe only added to Truman's disappointment that a man he believed really qualified was turning down a chance at the presidency. Truman was a little sad about all this, but he began to have a better understanding of the complex nature of the man he was trying unsuccessfully to draft for the nomination. The two parted on a friendly basis, now that Truman finally was convinced Stevenson would not be a candidate.

It was without any sure knowledge of what would happen, then, that Truman announced on March 29 he would not run again. The President had tried to get the man he wanted into the contest and had failed. But Truman was a realist; if Stevenson would not run, others would and in the end he could bestow his blessing on the individual whom he regarded as the best of the lot.

This blessing assuredly would not go to Senator Estes Kefauver of Tennessee, a rugged individualist who had not waited for a presidential "yes" or "no" but who had entered his name in the New Hampshire primaries against a Truman slate and had won handily.

Ol' Estes, a lanky, slow-talking Tennessean whose appearance of a country lout belied his political acumen, plodded his big-hand, big-foot way through the presidential primaries, mopping up all of the opposition in sight. Estes, who had become widely known through his conduction of televised crime hearings, was showing that he had a terrific appeal to the voters who troubled themselves to cast a ballot in the primaries.

Stevenson, meanwhile, was avoiding these vote tests like the plague. He went so far as to ask the Democrats of Oregon, when his name was entered in that state's contest against his wishes, to vote instead for Kefauver. At that point it was perfectly apparent Stevenson would have been well satisfied if the Democrats had nominated Kefauver.

But the Stevenson boom wouldn't roll over and play dead. It just seemed to pop up where least expected with the result that Colonel Jacob M. Arvey, the Illinois national committeeman, who

was a practical sort of politician, didn't know where to hang his hat. Arvey had to have some place to take the Illinois delegation, if he was to hold it together, and the logical place was to deposit it on Stevenson's doorstep as Illinois's favorite-son candidate. But Arvey couldn't get Stevenson to play ball.

Arvey had been burned badly in the abortive effort to draft Eisenhower for the 1948 Democratic nomination. It had required some especially adept footwork for the Illinois party boss to retrieve his position with Truman after the latter had been nominated, and Arvey wanted no more to do with draft movements where the prospective draftee wouldn't co-operate.

So in a New York apartment Arvey and Stevenson met one night for a final showdown and Stevenson's answer was "no." Arvey asked if Stevenson had any objection if the Illinois delegation picked up Senator Alben Barkley as its man until it could see which way the wind was blowing at the convention. Stevenson was agreeable and, in fact, considerably relieved. He hadn't given too much thought to Barkley, his distant cousin, because of the latter's advanced age. But suddenly the Kentuckian seemed to offer a safe harbor in which to sink the troublesome draft-Stevenson movement.

With Arvey properly discouraged, Stevenson followed through by convincing Frank McKinney, the Democratic National Chairman, that he would not run under any circumstances. Seldom in history had any man gone to such lengths to escape the presidential nomination and his efforts began to have their effect. McKinney and Truman agreed to give up on Stevenson, settling on Barkley as the best available candidate.

When this decision was communicated to him, Stevenson began to breathe easier. But he knew he had not removed himself from the shadow of the possibility of a draft and he knew he could not reject a genuine draft in the highly unlikely event that it developed. So he kept saying he "could not" run but avoided the total foreclosure that he "would not" run.

As the time for the national convention rolled around in July, Stevenson was fighting a rear-guard battle. Even he was beginning then to believe that the demand for his nomination might

be irresistible. Nevertheless, he kept saying he was not a candidate and kept doing what he could to head off the nomination.

When the volunteer Stevenson committee arranged to have his name placed before the convention, Stevenson got on the phone to Governor Henry F. Schricker of Indiana and Archibald Alexander, who was running for the Senate in New Jersey, to plead with them not to make nominating speeches for him. Alexander, an old friend, agreed reluctantly to abide by Stevenson's wishes but Schricker said bluntly that he was going ahead with plans to nominate the Illinois governor.

The Illinois delegation also was getting out of hand and Stevenson tried to prevent a bolt toward his candidacy by appearing before the group at a Sunday caucus just before the convention opened. The caucus was held behind closed doors but there was a crack in the partition where reporters stationed themselves and heard everything that went on.

Stevenson was at his eloquent best when he pleaded with the delegates not to force him into the presidential contest. He wound up by asking the delegation not to place his name in nomination nor to vote for him if others did.

But strong forces were at work for Stevenson that he could not control. In the important Pennsylvania delegation, Mayor David Lawrence of Pittsburgh, the state's national committeeman, and James Finnegan, chairman of the Philadelphia City Council, were moving toward Stevenson. The soft-spoken Finnegan, who was to become Stevenson's campaign manager in 1956, had not even met the Illinois governor at the time. Arvey knew that Illinois would jump to Stevenson at a word; Schricker had Indiana ready. New Jersey and Kansas were in line and other states were ready to fall in.

However, there was no lack of other candidates and Stevenson felt that as long as Truman and McKinney were behind Barkley he himself might avoid the nomination. But at this point Barkley made a mistake. He invited sixteen labor leaders to breakfast with him in the belief he could charm all of them into supporting his candidacy and thus make it a walkaway.

If Barkley had conferred individually with the labor leaders it is

likely he could have won the support of most of them. But when the question of Barkley's age arose—he was seventy-four at the time—a trickle of opposition soon became a flood. With tears in his eyes Barkley reported to us newsmen at the conclusion of the meeting that labor had turned him down. He and we knew he was finished and shortly thereafter he withdrew from the nomination contest with a bitterly worded blast at the labor leaders who always before had been his political friends.

Truman and McKinney suddenly were left without a candidate and the undercurrent was running swiftly in Stevenson's direction. Among other things, he was the convention's easiest answer to the North-South split over the so-called "loyalty oath," the pledge demanded of each delegation to support the nominees of the national ticket. This pledge was the direct outgrowth of the States' Rights party bolt in 1948, when Truman lost thirty-nine of the South's electoral votes.

Kefauver and Governor Averell Harriman of New York, among the major candidates for the presidential nomination, backed the "loyalty oath" and were all for stuffing it down the throats of delegates from Virginia, Louisiana, and South Carolina who had refused to sign. Harriman and Kefauver were looking to November, when they believed the Democratic candidate would need the support of racial minorities in the northern states to win. They were prepared to scratch off part of the South in exchange for those more vital votes. Had the "loyalty oath" advocates won their battle, the three state delegations probably would have walked out of the convention.

Any such development would have enhanced the chances of Harriman or Kefauver for the nomination, since the party would have committed itself to their general election-campaign strategy. But the stringent "loyalty oath" proposal was defeated and the way was cleared to draft Stevenson, the moderate, who then was regarded as acceptable to the South and, strangely, no less appealing to the northern minorities.

By this time, of course, Stevenson knew that the inevitable was upon him. He had told Bill Blair, his ever-present assistant, that he would have to accept if nominated. He called Truman to ask if

the man in the White House would be embarrassed if he permitted his name to be placed in nomination. Truman replied with a show of exasperation, "I have been trying since January to get you to say that. Why should it embarrass me?"

Truman's support put the icing on a nomination cake that was all but baked before the actual convention balloting started. All of the ingredients were present: Stevenson's name was officially before the convention; he had not repudiated the action; he had widely placed strength available for the first ballot. When the favorite sons and the hopeless contenders had had their brief turn under the lights, a majority of their supporters would gravitate to Stevenson.

Meeting in cubbyhole offices behind the stage in the convention hall, McKinney and Truman's lieutenants passed the word that it would be Stevenson. The labor leaders were satisfied, if all of them were not enthusiastic. The convention was in the hands of House Speaker Sam Rayburn as its presiding officer and Sam wanted Stevenson.

Nevertheless, the convention went about its official business of nominating a candidate, for all the world as if the decision had not already been made. On the first ballot, Kefauver topped the list with 340 votes, Stevenson had 273, and Senator Richard B. Russell of Georgia, the South's choice, had 268. Harriman trailed with 123½ and ten others lagged far behind.

Kefauver called up some reserve strength on the second roll call and registered a total of 362½. But despite the fact that some favorite sons still hung on, Stevenson climbed to 324½. At this point Rayburn recessed the convention for dinner and to provide time for the final round of behind-the-scenes vote switching.

When balloting was resumed and Kefauver strongholds began to crumble under the drive for Stevenson, Senator Douglas, a political Galahad who had picked Kefauver early and had stuck with him, grasped the dazed Tennessee senator by the hand and led him to the stage. It was obvious that Douglas wanted Kefauver to throw in the sponge while there still was time to salvage a vice-presidential nomination for the Tennessean.

But bald, perspiring Speaker Rayburn would have none of it.

Motioning Douglas and Kefauver to seats on the platform, he made it brusquely clear he would not interrupt the ballot count to let Kefauver speak. The punishment of Kefauver and Douglas for having dared to challenge the decision of the convention bosses was to sit in silent humiliation until the Stevenson victory was assured. Kefauver would have no part in it and no claim to second place on the ticket.

The backstage dealing had been done so well that Stevenson had 613 votes, only 2½ fewer than needed for the nomination, when the call of the states was completed and Utah's quick switch gave him the prize he had not wanted. The man who had entered no primaries, who had insisted to the last that he did not want the nomination, had been drafted. Even in his acceptance speech Stevenson maintained this reluctant attitude.

"I have not sought the honor you have done me," he told the convention. "I could not seek your nomination for the presidency because the burdens of that office stagger the imagination. Its potential for good and evil now and in the years of our lives smothers exaltation and converts vanity into prayer."

He was, as Stevenson said, not one to shrink in fear from the "dread responsibility." The convention having made its decision, he pledged to fight for the office "with all my heart and soul."

"And with your help," he said, "I have no doubt that we will win."

But his warning that "sacrifice, patience, understanding and implacable purpose may be our lot for years to come" plumbed beyond the depth of the average voter's thinking. The country was in no mood to look closely then at the "years of darkness, doubt and crisis" he said stretched ahead.

The Republicans were offering a candidate who had donned the armor of a crusader, whose appeal was that of an all-wise father who could be depended upon to work out the country's problems without too much stress and strain on the average man. Unless the Republicans stumbled badly they hardly could lose. But the Republicans did stumble and some hope remained among the Democrats.

## 14 Expenses Plague a Candidate



Bad news that chilled the Republican party and its glittering presidential candidate in the 1952 campaign arrived one morning on the front page of the *New York Post*. It was packaged in a story that said wealthy California friends had put up more than \$18,000 to subsidize Richard M. Nixon's expenses as a senator.

Eisenhower had been rather casual about picking Nixon from a list of half a dozen men eligible to be his running mate. He had summoned Nixon to him for the latter's assurances that there was nothing in his record that would sully the GOP banner. But it had all been a matter-of-fact sort of thing to the general; his subordinates in the army always had been investigated thoroughly. All one needed to do was to see the man who had been recommended and decide if he seemed personally acceptable for a position of trust.

When the *Post* lighted the fuse of its bomb, the Republican campaign against communism and corruption and the "mess in Washington" was in full swing. The "crusade" had turned the holy light of purity on the Truman administration and the Republicans undoubtedly were making progress with an electorate which had become weary of crony government and was seeking something better.

The *Post's* revelations, therefore, threatened exposures which might smudge the pristine GOP ticket, might set at naught all of the build-up of the good, clean, boy scout alternative the Republicans were offering to what they contended was the soiled record of the Democrats who had held power for so long.

It was very apparent to us newsmen who were accompanying Eisenhower in his political jaunts in the Midwestern hustings that the general was flabbergasted by the news that Nixon had accepted an expense allowance on the side. The presidential candi-

date's immediate reaction was that Nixon would have to be kicked off the ticket.

Two days after the story broke, Eisenhower marched back to the press work car of his campaign train to hold an off-the-record conference. Eisenhower told us he was greatly disturbed by the disclosures. He said he didn't know Nixon very well but didn't believe his running mate would do anything underhanded. But the general said, and he was firm about it, that Nixon would have to prove his innocence. What was the use of crusading against the "mess in Washington" if the Republican candidates were not "as clean as a hound's tooth?"

It was not until the next night that Eisenhower and Nixon talked on the phone. In that conversation, Nixon offered to get off the ticket if the general thought that was wise. Characteristically, Eisenhower replied he did not believe he should be the one to make that decision. Nixon exploded that he felt the time had come for Eisenhower to fish or cut bait.

The managers of the Nixon fund had explained that it was to be used for year-round campaigning by the senator. It would cover transportation, hotel bills, phone charges, mailing, and preparation of speeches and newsletters. These charges were beyond the ability of Nixon to pay, despite his salary and more than \$70,000 a year legal allowance for office help and other expenses.

The whole matter of Nixon's position remained up in the air on September 23, the fateful day the Eisenhower campaign train reached Cleveland, Ohio. The presidential candidate went through a torchlight parade that night that would have been pure 1890 vintage except for the gleaming automobiles in which he and his entourage rode. There were cheers enough in these precincts, which had been Taft's, for the defeated presidential candidate as well as for Eisenhower. But there were none for Nixon.

Never before had a candidate been stricken from a ballot under the circumstances that now presented themselves. But in his campaigning, Nixon was encountering signs that read: "No mink coats for Nixon, just cold cash." Democrats were trumpeting charges that what he had done was "morally wrong" and were calling him "Tricky Dickie."

If Eisenhower was undecided about Nixon, there was one man who was not. He was Chairman Arthur Summerfield of the Republican National Committee. Summerfield was not taking any chance of a party split over the choice of a successor for Nixon. It might be fatal to dump Nixon from the ticket at this point but it also might be fatal to keep him. The GOP National Chairman was willing to gamble the \$75,000 cost of a national television broadcast to let Nixon save his skin, if he could.

By this time, Eisenhower himself was anxious to be convinced that Nixon had done nothing wrong. Governor Dewey approved the broadcast gamble, although he phoned Nixon just before the latter went on the air that most Republican leaders thought he should quit.

With the best publicity experts the Republican committee could hire, Nixon went into an intensive three-hour rehearsal for what was to be presented as an informal chat with the American people. It was, of course, a trial for his political life and the vice-presidential candidate was fully aware he must perform under fire as almost no man before him had been called upon to do.

When he marched into a carefully prepared studio set depicting a homey living room, Nixon had been coached in every inflection he intended to use. His pretty wife, Pat, sat at his side and a newly acquired dog, Checkers, was conveniently at hand. If Roosevelt had his Fala, Nixon would have his Checkers.

Over sixty-five television and 750 radio stations, Nixon poured out in syrupy tones his defense of his honor. The core of his argument was that he had not benefited personally from the expense fund. None of the contributors had received any favors; they had merely made it possible for him to do a better job for California.

But Nixon, like a smart general, quickly abandoned the defensive for an offensive thrust against the opposition. The vice-presidential candidate spoke of the good Republican cloth coat that Pat owned. He spoke of the "mess in Washington." He insinuated the Democratic pot was considerably blacker than the Republican kettle.

Nixon put on a good show. Nowhere in the annals of political campaigns had there ever been anything quite like the response.

Five million words rolled in in telegraphic messages in support of this greatest of political commercials. Telephone exchanges and TV and radio stations were swamped. The GOP National Committee got 35,000 letters a day for a week or more.

Adlai Stevenson once quipped that a "voter's best friend is his underdog." Nixon, the underdog, turned a campaign liability into an asset and the 16,000 persons who sat in Cleveland's public hall that night to listen to his voice over the radio felt it instinctively. There was no need for checking individual reaction; the feel of the crowd permeated the place.

Eisenhower and his wife, Mamie, had gone to a side room to view the Nixon appearance on television. The crowd, which had cheered a speech by Taft, was left, stilled in the semidarkness of the large auditorium, to listen intently to Nixon.

It was an eerie scene, the audience sitting tense, almost immobilized as Nixon's voice boomed out:

"My fellow Americans, I speak to you tonight as a man whose integrity has been challenged. . . ."

On the partly lighted stage sat Taft, fiddling with a sheaf of papers and occasionally jotting down a note. If Eisenhower was undecided about Nixon, Taft already had made up his mind. The Ohio senator needed none of the theatricals of a TV broadcast; he had no patience with the charges against the vice-presidential candidate.

Taft knew that almost from the beginning of the Senate constituents had raised funds to help members meet expenses they encountered in Washington and couldn't pay out of their government allowances. Taft felt there was nothing immoral about it. Just say so and be done with it; go on about your business: that was Taft's answer.

But Senator Bricker, once a vice-presidential candidate himself, was not so sure. Bricker looked appraisingly and uneasily out on the blank faces of the crowd, whose members sat straining forward in their seats as if to avoid glancing at a neighbor.

Fascinated, the crowd followed Nixon's voice as he wove a pattern of integrity into his actions. The Nixon case flowed out uninterrupted by critical questioners; no skilled committee counsel

sat recording his statements, waiting for a chance to cross-examine him.

When time ran out and Nixon was cut off the air in the middle of a sentence, Eisenhower strode quickly on stage.

"Tonight," the general began solemnly, "I saw an example of courage."

The crowd roared back its approval.

Eisenhower went on to say that he was reserving judgment. He would, he said, have to see the documents involved and talk to Nixon personally before he could make any decision.

At this point, George Bender took over at the rostrum.

"Who do you want?" he yelled at the crowd.

"We want Nixon," thousands of voices thundered back.

That, in essence, was the answer; Nixon had elicited public sentiment in his cause. His performance had been technically perfect. What Franklin Roosevelt could have done with the Fala story on television, Nixon had come close to equaling.

As we traveled across Ohio toward West Virginia the next day with Eisenhower, it early became apparent that the presidential candidate was less interested in documents and proof of Nixon's integrity than he was in the public reaction to the TV-radio performance.

At each town, as Eisenhower spoke briefly, his lieutenants moved hastily to a station telephone booth to check up with Arthur Summerfield, the Republican National Chairman, on the progress of a vote among national committee members on the question of keeping Nixon on the ticket. There also were conversations arranging for the vice-presidential candidate, who had gone off to Montana campaigning, to meet with Eisenhower in Wheeling, West Virginia. It wasn't known publicly then, but Nixon made it clear in these talks he had no intention of meeting the general just to be booted off the team.

As the campaign train rolled nearer and nearer Wheeling, Eisenhower became progressively more positive about Nixon's integrity at each whistle stop. Two hours before we were due in Wheeling the general was saying that Nixon was an upstanding, honest young man who was being falsely accused by the Demo-

crats. There remained at that point no doubt his running mate would stay on the ticket.

But the drama must be played out and shortly after his train arrived in Wheeling, Eisenhower was off to the city's mountaintop airport to greet Nixon.

When Nixon's plane touched down on the runway, Eisenhower already was in motion before the ramp was fitted to the doorway of the big craft. Scrambling eagerly up the steps the general passed quickly into the plane and crowded down the aisle where the startled Nixon was just hoisting his coat over his shoulders.

"You're my boy," Eisenhower said with a broad grin, holding out his hand. As others on the plane closed in about them, Nixon, almost unnerved for the first time in his life, turned to Senator Knowland, standing beside him, ducked his head on Knowland's broad shoulder, and sobbed briefly.

In a fifteen-minute automobile ride from the airport to the mid-river field where Eisenhower spoke in the foggy, damp night air, the general had his only opportunity to look at the documents he had said he must see and to cross-examine his running mate on the expense fund. When they stepped from the car at the field, I asked Nixon what he and the presidential candidate had talked about.

"Oh," he replied, "it was just chitchat, nothing important at all."

Fifteen minutes later in his speech Eisenhower sealed Nixon's place on the ticket, the documents and the explanations all forgotten.

Nixon actually had been able to turn the tide that was running against him by employing the old technique of answering smear with smear. His essential reply to the \$18,000 expense-fund charge was that the Democrats had dealt in mink coats and his wife's was cut from good Republican cloth.

As we delve into the complex character of the man who was elected Vice-President at the age of thirty-nine, we shall find that he was amply versed in the tactics of mud throwing that have enlivened American politics from its gestation era, before parties were formally born.

This era began in Washington's second term when the Father

of his Country was subjected to the vicious criticism from the gutter of what then passed for American journalism. With Jefferson's introduction of political parties, the smear became an accepted part of political life.

In 1828, white-maned old Andy Jackson was pilloried for his duels and the unfortunate fact that he and Mrs. Jackson—who died before he became President—had been married a year before they discovered that her divorce from a previous husband only then had been formally granted.

In return, the Jackson adherents invented the story that when his strait-laced, sharp-tongued opponent, John Quincy Adams, had been minister to Russia he had aided in the seduction of an American girl by the Czar. Much ado also was made of the story that Adams had dipped into the public till to pay for a billiard table he had bought and had installed in the White House for his son.

However, the smear often rebounded to the benefit of the man toward whom it was aimed. This happened in the case of William Henry Harrison, the Whig candidate of 1840. Harrison probably owed his election to a nasty reference made about him in the *Baltimore Republican*.

The paper's editors said of Harrison ". . . give him a barrel of hard cider and a pension of two thousands a year and, our word for it, he will sit for the remainder of his days in a log cabin by a 'sea coal' fire and study moral philosophy."

In more modern times this would seem little more than a pink-tea indictment, but in 1840 those were fighting words. Spurred on by them the Whigs put on a wild "hard cider and log cabin" campaign in which their second-rate candidate, running without benefit of platform, won the presidency hands down.

What the Whigs had done in 1840 the Republicans were successful in duplicating, to some extent, in 1952; in both instances the successful party had created a climate that overshadowed any specific issue.

In 1840 there were no compelling issues. The voters weren't interested in moral philosophy but they liked their hard cider and not only had no objection to, but favored, a man who drank it.

While Harrison talked in generalities that meant nothing, his supporters donned coonskin caps and chanted "Tippecanoe and Tyler too" as they marched in torchlight parades. Log cabins sprang up all over the land and huge crowds turned out to Whig meetings.

In 1952 there were many issues but they were fogged in by the climate of frustration that hung low over the Democratic administration. Truman had failed to dramatize fully the ugly Korean War as a fight for freedom. MacArthur had misjudged the Communist Chinese intentions and strength and the conflict was in a stalemate.

The "mess in Washington" had irritated the voters and reputed Communist infiltration of the government had alarmed them. It was true that there was almost full employment in the country and that the cost of living had remained relatively stable since March 1951, but the people were uneasy about this wartime prosperity.

The Democrats had a candidate in Stevenson who wanted to "talk sense" to the American people, but they were in no mood to listen to a man who dressed up sage observations on the world's problems with subtle, sophisticated humor and such wisecracks as "Eggheads unite—you have nothing to lose but your yolks." Stevenson's attempt to leaven his grim messages with touches of humor worked against him with a populace which found its belly laughs mostly in the comic magazines or on television.

Stevenson was forever telling the people what they didn't really want to hear—that there were no ready-made solutions to the monstrous problems which confronted the nation. But theirs was not the mood for blood, sweat, and tears. Besides, Stevenson could find no black or white but only indefinite shadings on every question. This is a fatal stance for a politician, who must always be positive that he is right and the opposition is dead wrong. Stevenson was too prone to admit with a rueful sigh that he didn't know all of the answers. His enemies charged that he couldn't make up his mind—although they universally conceded he had a mind to make up.

Nor were the national circumstances propitious for the Demo-

crotic nominee. The South, where a goodly portion of his electoral strength must lie, was seething over civil rights, and Stevenson's moderate course on this issue pleased extremists neither in Dixie nor in the North. The presidential nominee stood with Truman—whose influence was at a low ebb—for federal ownership of the potentially oil-rich tidelands. That alone was to cost him Texas's support.

Although he tried diligently, Stevenson could not disassociate himself from the Truman administration scandals. Since he was a Democrat, he had to carry on his back the mistakes of twenty years of that party's White House administrations.

The fact that he was a divorced man did not endear the Democratic candidate to women voters. Without ever mentioning this circumstance, the Republicans played heavily upon the home-fires key. Everywhere he went Eisenhower made a point of introducing his radiant wife as "My Mamie." Nothing more needed to be said.

The liabilities piled up about the Democratic candidate thicker than the snow which began to fly in the northern states as the election neared. Everywhere Stevenson turned, the political climate was against him.

In contrast to this discouraging picture, the Republicans were offering a shining national hero, a man who was heading a crusade to clean up the "mess in Washington." He was a man who projected always the image of the wise parent in whom the restless children of an age of exasperating turmoil and discontent could place their trust.

Hadn't Eisenhower proved during World War II that he could deal on equal terms with the most brilliant diplomats in the world? Hadn't he won the peace almost singlehandedly? Wasn't he promising a balanced budget and prosperity for all?

Of course, there were some minor Republican campaign misadventures. While the Nixon matter had been disposed of satisfactorily, there were other plaguing incidents such as that which occurred on the night of October 8, 1952, in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Eisenhower, who had been preaching the internationalist doctrine in the East, had come to the capital of suspected isolationism

to woo the Taft Republicans. The latter still were cool toward him despite the "great surrender." The feeling among the general's advisers was that he should be able to give the old guard a shot in the arm in Indianapolis and move on quickly without too long an association with this element of the party.

There was a ticklish personal question involved at Indianapolis, too, since Senator William Jenner, who was running for re-election, had described General Marshall, Eisenhower's military mentor, as "a front man for traitors." Eisenhower was convinced by his advisers that he could brush lightly over this situation without calling any special attention to Jenner.

But none of these calculations took into account the possibility that the brash Jenner, who wanted to be re-elected in what he already sensed was an Eisenhower tide, might take matters into his own hands.

The hall was packed as Eisenhower marched triumphantly on stage, his arms upraised in response to the thunderous applause of the crowd. As the photographers began to pop their flashlight bulbs, Jenner skipped quickly across the stage, wrestled briefly for possession of the general's left arm, and then raised his own with it in a pictorial token of friendship and comradeship. After an expression of disgust had flitted briefly across his face, Eisenhower smiled. The deed was done when the presidential nominee endorsed all Indiana Republicans, including Jenner, in his speech.

All in all, it was a bad night for Eisenhower. As he swung into his prepared address, the mechanical prompter from which he was reading failed momentarily. Suddenly out over the radio went words unheard in the hall:

"Go ahead. Go ahead. Yeah, damn it, I want him to move up."

When a tremendous deluge of protests rolled in that night and the next day, the official explanation of Eisenhower's lieutenants was that the words were those of a radio technician and not of a candidate exasperated because the prompter had failed to move the lines of his text swiftly enough.

The technician, unfortunately, was not asked to state his case. He was lost in the limbo of men who serve presidential candidates and get home late for supper.

There was another embarrassing incident as Eisenhower's campaign train proceeded toward Milwaukee, Wisconsin, for a major address. Senator McCarthy, who already had become anathema to the Democrats but still was favorably regarded by the Taft Republicans, boarded the candidate's special. Eisenhower felt required to consult with McCarthy about his forthcoming speech.

There remains confusion over why the Republican candidate agreed to delete from his Milwaukee talk a paragraph praising General Marshall. Republican Governor Walter Kohler of Wisconsin later took full responsibility for suggesting to Eisenhower that he eliminate the Marshall paragraph, since McCarthy had joined in the chorus of criticism against Marshall. There was other evidence that the presidential candidate had heard a similar suggestion from the senator. In any event, Eisenhower spoke no words of approval for Marshall when he delivered his address.

Although these incidents apparently had no material effect on the outcome of the election, they did influence the climate of the campaign. The liberals of both parties had available an excuse not to vote for Eisenhower, who had avoided defending Marshall as if he were currying the favor of the McCarthys and the Jenners.

The church people, already skeptical of Eisenhower because he was not one of them, might feel they should vote against a man who cursed—if indeed the general did—when some minor mistake upset him.

These were the sorts of mishaps that had to be risked, however, in the expensive campaign tours that were designed primarily to whip up support for the candidate among voters who ordinarily had little interest in politics but whose natural curiosity about the man who was running for President might be made to pay off at the polls.

Not since Harding rocked on his front porch at Marion, Ohio, in 1920, had a presidential aspirant been willing to let the people come to him. He must, perforce, go to them to sell his bill of goods and Eisenhower was no exception in this case.

The twentieth century had seen all types of campaigns, ranging from Theodore Roosevelt's adventures in the West—when a gunman sat on stage in one town to cow a hostile crowd—to the jet

age when a candidate could make appearances on the same day on opposite coasts.

There had been indefatigable campaigners like William Jennings Bryan, who could get along on three hours of sleep a night, dozing between a score of speaking stops during a day. Bryan once spoke twenty-seven times in less than twenty-four hours, and one wonders how he managed in the meantime to crowd in the six meals he ordinarily ate each day.

Unlike Bryan, Eisenhower had no inborn taste for campaigning. The general obviously accepted this assignment as another of the duties to which he had pledged himself when he agreed to seek the nomination. Largely because of two old pros who had learned the hard way in two campaigns with Dewey—Herbert Brownell and James C. Hagerty—Eisenhower's campaign was well organized. For the general the trains ran on time and the airplanes took off on the dot. Eisenhower's speeches came out of the duplicating machines in plenty of time before their delivery to gain the widest newspaper, television, and radio attention.

As the public responded to the planned efforts to show off the Republican candidate at his smiling best, the general himself began to fall more into the spirit of things. Sometimes he even seemed so carried away with the "We want Ike" chant that he began to enjoy campaigning almost as much as Truman, who thrived on close contacts with the people.

Because he previously had maintained a clocklike schedule which permitted no surprise appearances, Eisenhower caught us all literally asleep early one morning in September 1952 when his campaign special made an operating stop at Salisbury, North Carolina. The sun wasn't up yet but 200 persons had gathered, hoping for a glimpse of the candidate while the refrigeration system of the train was being iced.

When the general heard the "We want Ike" chant, he hustled out to the rear platform, clad in pajamas and a maroon robe, and learned over the railing to shake every outstretched hand.

"Wait a minute and I'll try to get Mamie," he told his admirers.

In a moment Mrs. Eisenhower came to the car door, wearing a negligee and with her hair in curlers. Sleepy-eyed, she waved to

the crowd and a man shouted: "You even look good in the morning."

Eisenhower explained that he hadn't known the train was going to stop.

"My staff would give me the devil if they knew I was up," he said with an infectious grin. "I'm supposed to be resting."

Just then the train started with a jerk and began slowly to roll southward away from the small gathering with the general and his lady waving at the receding voters. Behind them they were leaving the warm feeling invoked by personal contact with a presidential candidate. This was one of the benefits for which national party committees were willing to lay out hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The campaign train, a twentieth-century tradition, may be going the way of railroad passenger traffic. The tendency now is to fly hurriedly from one large or medium-sized city to another, with the candidate often stopping only long enough for a speech at an airport and then rocketing on to another state. Even though autocaravan tours were arranged that sometimes covered as much as 100 miles, they left many of the voters at the crossroads and the whistle stops without a glimpse of the man who was running for President.

If campaign trains were of no political value to their cause, the two major parties were more than fifty years in finding it out. For years they had dutifully equipped a campaign special and had sent it crisscrossing the country with scheduled stops where their candidates could speak to from fifty to 5000 or more people.

Usually made up of sixteen or eighteen cars, the train was an air-conditioned city in itself. It bedded down and fed the candidate, staff members, newsmen, and ordinary politicians. If the President were aboard, he had a special car fitted with the best living accommodations on rails and all of the latest electronic equipment with which to keep in constant touch with the White House—and through it the world—on all of the internal and external affairs of government.

To match this arrangement, Truman ordered installed on Dewey's 1948 train a teletype which would furnish to the opposi-

tion candidate the latest important messages on foreign-affairs developments.

A Pullman car—usually of the vintage of 1890—was converted into a press work car by the simple expedient of ripping out the interior installations, building wooden tables along each side, and plunking some folding chairs down in the resulting aisle. From these quarters reporters turned out millions of typewritten and dictated words that kept a candidate and his ideas before the country.

At each stop the reporters had the option of “hitting the dirt” and legging it to the rear of the train to scan the crowd and listen to the candidate’s remarks or of remaining in the work car to catch his words as they were piped in on a loud-speaker.

Since press association men worked in pairs, it was customary for one to remain at his typewriter and the other to “hit the dirt,” get an estimate from local police of the size of the crowd, note any untoward incidents, and either dash to a phone to dictate his story or hurry back to the work car to bat out a few lines to be handed to Western Union before the train pulled out.

There was an uncertain element of timing and chance in this operation as I found on one hot day in San Bernardino, California, when Dewey, then the GOP nominee, made some unexpected remarks. In a telephone booth, dictating the story to Los Angeles, I looked out and saw the train beginning to move while the candidate still was speaking.

No reporter who is traveling with a presidential candidate can afford to be left behind, watching his assignment and his home on wheels moving out of his reach. Cutting off in the middle of a sentence, I shouted, “Train’s going,” and hung up.

Racing out to the tracks, I sprinted to catch up with the cars that were gathering speed. On the back platform, Paul Lockwood, Dewey’s assistant, saw my plight, hurriedly opened the gate to the steps, and cheered me on. I managed to grab the railing and swing aboard with Lockwood’s help just as the engineer put on a burst of speed.

Each campaign train had its own distinctive atmosphere. With Willkie in 1940 the whole operation could be described with one

word—"chaos." Yet there was a spirit about it that was lacking on the more sedate and orderly special train that carried Eisenhower to his appointments with the people. When the harassed reporters found themselves one day passing through the whistle stop of Paradise, Montana, almost to a man they dispatched stories date-lined: "With Willkie in Paradise."

Something untoward always seemed to be happening on the Dewey trains. One of these incidents came on a sparkling fall morning when we were clattering rhythmically along the Great Northern tracks from Seattle, Washington, on our way to Portland, Oregon, where Dewey was to make a major speech that night.

Gardner Bridge, another AP reporter, and I were sitting in the work car with a few other early risers, going over an advance text of Dewey's speech. Suddenly, we weren't sitting at all. With a tremendous crash the train stopped dead and typewriters and chairs flew in every direction. Bridge, who weighed about 150 pounds, found himself on the bottom of a heap, with my 190 pounds, a couple of typewriters and chairs deposited on top of him.

I should like to say that when we picked ourselves up groggily from amid our first train wreck, we thought first of the presidential candidate and his lady and our duty to get off a story on this unprecedented happening to a campaign special. But we didn't.

From the well-stocked bar in the corner, where the Pullman Company had been dispensing drinks at ninety cents each, had spewed out a cascade of miniature bottles of whiskey.

Automatically, Gardner and I reached out, picked up a miniature each, uncorked it, and swallowed the contents. Fortified with another of these windfalls, we made our way back through the train to find that Dewey and his wife had survived the wreck without major mishap.

Checking others for injuries, we climbed down to the tracks and—nursing our own broken ribs—puffed up to interview the engineer, E. A. Wells. His story was simple. He had come around a curve, had seen a stalled passenger train ahead, and hadn't been able to stop in time before his engine plowed into it.

The problem then was how to get the story off. I solved it by

climbing a steep bank to a nearby highway and thumbing a ride to the nearest phone, where I dictated the story to Portland for what was registered as a seventeen-minute beat over the opposition.

The Dewey travels, and later those of Eisenhower, were model operations, so far as the press was concerned, because of the presence of the knowledgeable Hagerty. Steve Early had done the same sort of a smooth job for Roosevelt.

Riding about the country with Truman, however, always involved sheer exasperation, mixed with exuberance and a touch of exhaustion thrown in. Despite the efforts of patient, kindly Charles Ross and his successors, Joseph Short and Roger Tubby, the advance texts of Truman's speeches seldom came out on time.

There would often be a last-minute scramble, with Ross, Short, or Tubby arriving at the press work car to provide some partial notes on the forthcoming talk only minutes before the train was to arrive at the city where the major address was scheduled. And then Truman sometimes disregarded his advance text and talked about something else.

Campaigning with Stevenson was like traveling with a Truman who had been exposed to Princeton. There was the same disorder and catch-as-catch-can happenings, overlarded with an intellectual atmosphere that Truman would have disdained. Where Truman was practical and earthy, Stevenson was too ethereal for the average voter who did not care to look down the hard roads toward which the Democratic candidate pointed his finger.

So it was that the man who promised peace, who chose not to dwell on the difficult decisions that seemed certain to lie ahead, arrived at the climax of the 1952 campaign in Detroit on October 24. There Eisenhower voiced a proposal thought up by Emmet Hughes, one of his speech writers—a proposal that was interpreted widely as a pledge to end on acceptable terms the Korean War, which some Republican orators had been calling "Truman's war."

"That job requires a personal trip to Korea," Eisenhower said. "I shall make that trip. I shall go to Korea."

For all practical purposes the contest ended that night. Stevenson had rejected a proposal of his advisers to make the same sort

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of pledge because he felt any settlement would necessarily involve a partial surrender to the Communists on terms.

But Eisenhower, the World War II hero, had the confidence of the people. He would be a welcome relief to Truman, of whom they were tired.

## 15 The Order Changes



The long, black limousine purred up to the west Pennsylvania Avenue gates, paused momentarily while a uniformed guard peered at the passengers inside, and then rolled slowly up the curved drive to the White House portico. Inside a doorman lifted a buzzing telephone, with a connection at the front gate, listened briefly, and hurried up the broad stairs. In a moment the President of the United States came rapidly down the steps and halted a few paces from the door, awaiting the man he had earlier invited to come for breakfast but who had declined.

Outside the car came to a halt and an aide climbed out. He walked briskly up the steps and presented himself at the door. As it opened quickly to admit him, President Harry S. Truman took an expectant step forward and then froze in his tracks.

"Mr. President," the aide said, bowing curtly, "the general is waiting outside in the car. He will not come in."

Flushing, Truman turned and was helped into his coat. He was handed the bowler hat that the general had decreed would be worn in the day's ceremonies instead of the traditional high, silk headgear.

With a scant hour to go as President, Truman passed out of the door and entered the waiting car. At high noon General Dwight D. Eisenhower would be sworn in as the first Republican President in twenty years while his Democratic predecessor looked on. Now, two men who once had admired each other, who had worked together and had been able to laugh together were to ride together in the bitterness of stony silence in an inaugural parade.

Where Roosevelt had sought by light conversation to distract Hoover's mind from the bitter end of an era, Eisenhower offered no solitary word to Truman in the long ride down Pennsylvania Avenue to the Capitol. The crowds cheered and the two men who

sat side by side smiled and waved in response, but the silence remained a high barrier between them.

"There was not a word said until we got to the Capitol and were met by the reception committee headed by Senator Hayden," Truman related. "Then General Eisenhower said he'd like to know who had ordered his son, Major Eisenhower, flown back from Korea for the Inaugural. I said I had and if he didn't like it, he knew what he could do about it."

Thus at the beginning of his stewardship Eisenhower displayed behind the scenes an intransigence in coming to terms with any who might question his actions or his decisions. A general was used to obedience and not argument. And this particular general was showing himself thin-skinned about the kind of criticism that a Truman dealt out to the enemy as a matter of course during a political campaign.

Truman had pinned a medal on Eisenhower's chest when the hero returned from the wars on June 18, 1945. The two men had been great friends then and in subsequent speeches Eisenhower had praised Truman's "enlightened statesmanship."

The friendship had lingered on even after Eisenhower had become an avowed candidate for the Republican nomination. When he returned from Europe after resigning his NATO post, Eisenhower drove directly from the airport to the White House, where Truman spent fifty minutes chatting with his good friend and showing him around the newly renovated structure.

It is Truman's version that the breach between him and Eisenhower came about during the 1952 campaign. But the former President may have forgotten that only a week after the White House visit he made a speech at Howard University, a Negro institution, in which he voiced scathing criticism of army segregation policies that had been followed by Eisenhower. By that time Truman was convinced the general would be the Republican nominee and thus his friend became fair game.

On his part, Eisenhower fired back on June 26 with a speech in Denver assailing Truman's foreign and domestic failures and demanding "a good old-fashioned clean-up and clean-out."

Years later Truman told a National Press Club audience that "there is nothing personal between the President and myself."

"I gave him hell in 1952 when he didn't knock Jenner off the platform for calling General Marshall a traitor," Truman said. "He's been mad at me ever since [and] I don't give a damn."

Eisenhower replied at a news conference that he had too much sense to waste time "getting mad at anybody." He said he had chosen Marshall to represent the United States at the coronation of Britain's Queen Elizabeth, adding that this was "as great a personal honor as I could offer an individual in this country."

"And so," he said, "to say that I have ever stood still while any man, in my presence, was reviling General Marshall is not true." The President was correct; Jenner had made his attack on Marshall in the Senate, months before Eisenhower endorsed the Indiana senator for re-election.

An estrangement between an incoming and an outgoing President was not unprecedented. John Adams had stolen quietly out of the President's house at night to avoid being present at Jefferson's inauguration. Similarly John Quincy Adams packed up and moved out on the night of March 3, 1829, after Andrew Jackson had declined to pay a customary courtesy call on the retiring chief executive. At his inauguration, General Grant had refused to ride in the same carriage with Andrew Johnson.

Unlike some of his predecessors, Eisenhower carried this disagreement even further. All First Families, when they move into the White House, attempt to erase the landmarks of those who have just given up their lease on the government mansion. In this respect the Eisenhowers were no different, with a single exception.

Margaret Truman had had a passion for pink furniture and it had been strewn about the President's residence at every likely spot. Mamie Eisenhower happened also to like pink furniture. Without ado, the new President's wife gathered up Margaret's treasures where she found them and assembled them in her own pink bedroom.

As if to offset this concession to the old Democratic order, Eisen-

hower saw to it that other landmarks of Trumanism were obliterated from the White House.

Shortly after the general had been escorted about the renovated residence by Truman the previous year, a Democratic-dominated Congressional Restoration Committee had decided that a metal plaque should be erected in a prominent place to commemorate the second over-all rebuilding of the historic structure since the British had burned it in 1814.

Accordingly this group had placed on the wall of the first-floor corridor, near the east gate, a plaque which bore Truman's name and those of the committee which had been responsible for the renovation.

Quietly the decision was made that this testimonial to the fact that Truman had been President was to be covered. From the archives on which the White House could draw, there was resurrected a seven-foot-wide portrait of William McKinley, the last Republican before Eisenhower who had been re-elected. The wide-range McKinley portrait amply blotted out the plaque which honored Truman.

Perhaps this indulgence of presidential pique might have been condoned when the nation was young and the men who were struggling for power could afford to demonstrate their animosity to those who opposed them. But by 1952 America was faced by the challenge from a strident imperialism that permitted no chink in the armor of unity at home.

Truman, of course, had regarded his assaults against Eisenhower as merely the kind of "campaign oratory" which Wendell Willkie confessed he was employing when he said in the 1940 campaign that if Roosevelt were elected the country would be in war by April. Roosevelt forgave Willkie and used him to promote the "One World" idea.

To Truman it was standard operating procedure to attack the opposition candidate with every means at hand during the campaign but to forget the whole thing and co-operate afterward for the nation's good. Several years after the 1952 battle was over, Truman remained amazed at Eisenhower's reaction to his assaults.

"Why," the former President told me disbelievingly, "Eisenhower took everything to heart that was said about him in the campaign!" To Truman, the practical politician, this was incomprehensible. To Eisenhower, whose pride had been wounded deeply, the former President had proved himself an ingrate with whose services he could dispense.

Truman had recognized the profligate waste of talent inherent in the custom of discarding former Presidents like a worn-out shoe. Because of the peculiar circumstances that surrounded his own inauguration, Franklin Roosevelt probably never gave any thought to the qualities in Herbert Hoover he could have utilized. Roosevelt's antipathy to Hoover undoubtedly was enhanced by the latter's 1936 campaign activities in which the former President dwelt on the dictatorship theme and said that because of F.D.R.'s policies the Statue of Liberty seemed on the way toward becoming the "forgotten woman."

It remained for Truman to summon the former Republican President to the White House on May 28, 1945, more than twelve years after Hoover had vacated the premises, to ask his advice and counsel. Truman was concerned with feeding Europe, which was starving in the desolation of a war just ended. In a 35,000-mile trip Hoover came up with the answers that helped solve one of the free world's most pressing problems. His work on government reorganization plans subsequently was hailed as saving a great deal more money than it actually did, but Truman was utilizing every resource at his command.

Except for a brief and casual encounter at the funeral of Chief Justice Fred Vinson in the fall of 1953, and a handshake at General Marshall's rites in 1959, the two old friends did not meet in the years that stretched out in Eisenhower's two elective terms. Once Truman got as close to the White House as the back fence, which runs along the curved drive with the Washington Monument in the background. Looking somewhat wistfully at his former home, the ex-President said he had no wish to visit it again. "I've had enough of that," he said.

Though he relented later, Eisenhower did not avail himself of Truman's services when they might have helped smooth the

Republican administration's way over the cobblestones of congressional opposition to vital presidential proposals.

In the winter of 1957 when his foreign-aid program was encountering stiff resistance in Congress, Eisenhower authorized the appointment of Eric Johnston, head of the motion-picture industry, as chairman of a rally to stir up support for the Mutual Security Program. Johnston conceived the idea that if Eisenhower and Truman would appear on the same platform, it would demonstrate American solidarity behind the program.

Johnston enlisted Vice-President Nixon to go with him to broach the idea to Eisenhower. When Johnston brought up the proposal the President exploded in one of those displays of temper for which he was noted. Truman would not be on any program with him, Eisenhower said heatedly. When they were ushered out of the President's presence, Johnston and Nixon got a lecture from Sherman Adams about upsetting the boss.

Perhaps the reluctance to utilize the experience and the mellowed judgment of his predecessor could not be chalked up against the new President as a cardinal failure. But it signaled his lack of understanding of the rules of the political game, a circumstance that was to plague him during his two terms.

Moreover, there certainly was in this petty feud no promise of the broad understanding that is the prerequisite of a successful chief executive. The American people are extraordinarily demanding of the Presidents they nominate by haphazard methods and usually elect on some emotional issue.

Fundamentally the people want a President with the integrity of Washington, the guts of Jackson, the unwavering purpose of Lincoln, the energy of Theodore Roosevelt, and the flexibility of Franklin Roosevelt.

That is a difficult prescription to compound and if Eisenhower did not succeed in mixing all of the ingredients successfully—or, indeed, if he lacked some of them—that is not to say that he did not do his best by his lights. This durable equipment of greatness was not available to all men and could not be fitted together properly by some who had it. For even if a President owned a substantial share of these attributes, they would be valueless unless

he were skilled and energetic in using the political tools at his command.

The President, of course, must maintain his immense prestige as the one elected official of the government responsible to all of the people. He must know how to interpret accurately and swiftly the trends of public opinion and be able to bend these toward the channels of the future. He must know how to use patronage effectively to control and satisfy his own party. He must know the value of compromise with the political opposition.

If no one President ever had all of these qualities, nor the ability to use them in full measure, it must be said that the nation's outstanding chief executives possessed more than an average share of them.

Few men came to the presidency with as high prestige as that enjoyed by Eisenhower when he began his labors in January 1953. With his quick, winning smile, his expressive face, his erect bearing, and his general attitude of good will toward all, the new chief executive bore a dignity, an outward warmth, and a solidarity the people wanted. Here was a big man, they seemed to say to themselves; a man we can depend on to tend the nation's business while we go about our own affairs.

As a war hero Eisenhower offered peace and security. He would know how to deal with those pesky Russians. He would know how to end the frustrating Korean War. He would clean up that "mess in Washington" and once again there would be efficiency and honesty in government. Americans could settle back comfortably to enjoy prosperity and, perhaps best of all, a reduction in taxes.

But the garments of a hero provide little protection against the slings and the arrows of the presidency. The hero role is difficult to live up to in the stress of everyday decisions. And in the man who took his oath of office as the January sun shone wanly down on the east portico of the Capitol, there remained no call to adventure, no taste for experiment. Eisenhower had reached the pinnacle of men's esteem during the war and would have been happy to have rested there. To him the presidency was a duty, not a challenge.

The military training which had placed him in a position to become a world-renowned figure stood like an upturned rock in his presidential path. West Point is noted for graduating fine generals, but it has not often produced a philosopher or even a deep student of government. There was no evidence, moreover, that Eisenhower had explored any substantial distance beyond the military texts in efforts to broaden his knowledge. Where Truman read history for relaxation, Eisenhower read Westerns.

The new President had a palpable disdain for eggheads, as he showed clearly in 1954 when he described an intellectual as "a man who takes more words than necessary to tell us more than he knows."

It was true Eisenhower had dealt at firsthand with the world's leading diplomats and with its top military figures. But his had always been primarily a military objective fixed by higher authority. Truman was biased, of course, when he described his former friend as "a great military commander in Europe and NATO, when he had someone to tell him what to do." But Truman's contention that Eisenhower was a poor policy maker found some supporting evidence as the years rolled by.

In the beginning, Eisenhower presented the country with a picture of dignity in the presidency that was satisfying to the people who were tired of the monkeyshines that had marked the squabbling carried on with Congress during the Truman administration.

As befitted a general accustomed to military pomp, Eisenhower kept intact the ornamental façade of his office. He, who had not bothered before, became a devout churchman. If he sang badly and slightly off key, he knew the words of the hymns and his voice was vigorous. He wrote no S.O.B. letters as had his predecessor. He would not brawl with the McCarthys of his party nor the critics of the opposition.

The position Eisenhower took above the fray—and maintained more than six years—was somewhat in the manner of Washington, a non-partisan President of all the people. While this was desirable in theory, it did not contribute to vitality in a government where democracy was sustained by a close balance between political

parties and where progress depended basically on political leadership.

We correspondents who had accompanied the shining figure of the hero general as he stumped the country in 1952 had speculated that another Roosevelt had come to warm the people at his hearthsidge and to enlist them in his cause. True, he spoke often in platitudes but even these seemed appealing in their simplicity after the rantings of the "give 'em hell" campaigns. And on that day in Detroit when he said, "I shall go to Korea," there seemed little doubt this man of action would galvanize the country for a surge into the uncertain future.

It was as a man of peace that Eisenhower possessed his greatest appeal to the people. And if there was any course within his administration which suggested the unwavering purpose of Lincoln, it was in the pursuit of peace.

Eisenhower could, and did, bring the shooting in Korea to a halt on terms Truman correctly did not believe public opinion would permit him to accept. When Vice-President Nixon took a flier to suggest in an off-the-record talk to the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) there was a possibility American troops would be employed on the side of the French in their fight with the Communists in Indochina, Eisenhower promptly squelched this story.

Although he himself had said the preservation of a free Indochina was vital to the non-Communist world, Eisenhower stayed the impulsive hand of Admiral Arthur W. Radford when the belligerent chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff proposed an American air strike to relieve the French at Dien Bien Phu.

When the Communists bombarded the Nationalist-held islands off Formosa in 1955, the image of Eisenhower as a military genius turned man of peace still shone brightly. Congress was quite willing, after the Democrats had made a show of amending an administration resolution, to pass the buck to the President on the issue of whether or when the United States would fight to defend Quemoy and Matsu. The politically inspired "unleashing" of Chiang Kai-shek in the 1953 inaugural address was quietly withdrawn. It died, as the Republican "liberation" policy for European

iron-curtain countries expired in 1956 when Soviet tanks put down the Hungarian revolt.

When the Far East crisis had ended temporarily, the matter of Quemoy and Matsu was pigeonholed. No plan was developed to extricate the United States from a military commitment that might prove untenable, short of a major war. Here the situation rested until 1957 when the Chinese Communists reopened their type of "negotiations" with an intensive artillery barrage on the islands.

We reporters were furnished an explanatory key to Eisenhower's handling of all of these military crises—and for that matter, almost every domestic or foreign crisis of any type—at a news conference when the President was questioned about the delicate Far Eastern situation. Asked if he intended to defend Quemoy and Matsu, Eisenhower replied:

"You simply cannot make military decisions until after the event reaches you."

The event, domestic or foreign, must come to the President; then he would act. He would not venture out into the future in an effort to arrange more palatable events. If the Middle East stewed in ferment, one encouraged the Baghdad Pact without joining it. One offered military aid and a trickle of economic assistance to back up the so-called "Middle Eastern Doctrine." One temporized and talked. Then one day the inevitable crisis arrived and one dispatched American troops to Lebanon.

There would be some flashes of the imagination and the vision of a Wilson. They would come in a proposal for an atoms-for-peace program and in picking up Democratic suggestions for an international loan fund to assist underdeveloped nations in their struggle for economic sunlight and a nationalism of their own choosing.

With the final year of his stewardship approaching without any notable progress in the quest for world peace, Eisenhower would reverse in mid-1959 the policy of rigidity the departed Dulles had pursued and would arrange an exchange of visits with Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev. He would win from Khrushchev a withdrawal of the time ultimatum on Berlin and an agreement on

negotiations that might lead to some melting of the ice in the cold war.

With Dulles and Adams gone, the general was without his chief of staff and his field commander. Egged on by his brother, Dr. Milton Eisenhower, the President was forced to take to the field himself. He went off to Europe to visit with the heads of the free states. He engaged in the kind of personal diplomacy, with them and with Khrushchev, which he had told a news conference less than three months before he regarded as "a step backward."

In the same period Eisenhower would demonstrate a newborn leadership in rallying the Republicans behind budget balancing. But this would hardly compensate for the lack of White House initiative on many other domestic problems that sorely troubled the nation.

When the Supreme Court ruled racial segregation in the schools was unconstitutional, one would urge patience and good will, but one would not evolve any plan to lead the recalcitrant South toward peaceable acceptance of the Court's order. Then one day crisis would arrive and one would dispatch 101st airborne troopers to Little Rock, Arkansas, to enforce the Court's order for integration there.

James M. Cox, the Democrats' sacrificial lamb on the altar of "normalcy" in 1920, once aptly described as the most important attribute of a President "the power to take a situation by the nape of the neck and the seat of the trousers and shake a result out of it."

But Eisenhower had made it amply clear he had no intention of trying to shake any result out of the integration controversy. To it, as to other issues, he would react when he must; until then he would depend on natural forces and the passage of time to ameliorate the problem.

As early as March 1956, when southern members of Congress signed a manifesto denouncing the Court's opinion and promised to use every legal means to thwart it, Eisenhower said he was sworn to uphold the Constitution, but "we are not talking here about coercing, using force." By September he was saying at a press conference that "the federal government is not allowed to go into any state unless called in by the Governor. . . ."

Even as late as July 17, 1957, a little more than two months before he sent the troops to Little Rock, he told us confidently:

"I can't imagine any set of circumstances that would ever induce me to send federal troops into a federal court and into any area to enforce the orders of the federal court, because I believe that the common sense of America will never require it."

After he had found it necessary to do what he said he couldn't imagine himself doing, Eisenhower was astonished—as he himself put it—when it was suggested that a different result might have been attained if he had provided some leadership in seeking some other solution.

He replied tartly that the problem had been discussed "within the inner circles of the administration time and time again." But he never believed, he went on, that there would be any real compliance with the law until "you win the hearts and minds of men to the logic and decency of a situation. . . ."

In this whole affair Eisenhower took the Buchanan position that it was the President's duty only to execute the law. He would not speak out on the High Court's opinion, except to call on Americans to support the decision. Eisenhower explained that it was possible he could "disagree very violently with a decision" and he said if he expressed an opinion either favoring or disapproving it, his enforcement duty "would be very much more difficult to carry out."

That there was to be no presidential leadership in the controversial integration field became clearly evident when he said of the Court order:

"I think it makes no difference whether I endorse it. What I say is . . . the Constitution is as the Supreme Court interprets it; and I must do my very best to see that it is carried out in this country."

The President's tendency to fulfill the constitutional admonition "to take care that the laws be faithfully executed," but otherwise to stand apart from the controversy, carried over into other fields. One of these involved reorganization of the Defense Department, a task in which he was accorded the rank of expert.

Here again Eisenhower adopted an attitude of detachment that was in sharp contrast with any Truman or Roosevelt ever took on

proposals they submitted to Congress. The core of the controversy over defense reorganization centered around proposals for a single chief of staff for the armed forces, a change that Eisenhower himself once had recommended but subsequently had come to oppose.

It was with some amazement that we reporters listened to him say at a 1958 press conference that his "personal convictions, no matter how strong," should not be the deciding factor in altering the defense line-up. As a matter of fact, the President got pretty much what he wanted in the bill that finally was passed by Congress. Cagey Sam Rayburn and Lyndon Johnson were taking no chances of having it said they had overruled the general's military judgment, although he himself was reluctant to impose that judgment.

Even when Eisenhower was willing to step briefly to the firing line on domestic issues, he sometimes appeared undecided on what course to pursue. The 1957 battle of the budget furnished an example of alternating presidential attack and retreat.

Eisenhower had pledged on that 1952 day of the "great surrender" to pare the budget to sixty billion dollars a year. This had been part of the price of winning the support from conservatives turned sullen by the defeat of their hero, Taft, for the GOP nomination. Even at the expense of some rather drastic reductions in defense outlays that were to figure in the gap between Russian and American missile strength that was to develop later, Eisenhower had labored diligently in the budget-balancing vineyard.

But the President discovered that the world moves on and the goals of 1952 were unattainable in 1957. Strangely enough, it was George Humphrey, the guardian of the administration's main pillars of financial stability, who brought on the storm against his old friend, the President.

The genial Humphrey, a twinkling-eyed, Roman-nosed big businessman who had the ability to charm a Hottentot, was not happy as he presided over a seminar at which the budget was explained in detail to correspondents in advance of its public release. Humphrey was popularly supposed to represent the Taft viewpoint in the Cabinet, although Taft had told me at the time

of the appointment that he didn't even know the new Secretary of the Treasury personally.

In any event, Humphrey was disturbed about the kind of spending that was represented in Eisenhower's seventy-two billion-dollar budget. The Secretary was defending the President's recommendations but everyone knew he didn't like his role.

Finally Humphrey could contain himself no longer. His face clouding, the Secretary said somberly that if the government kept on with this volume of spending the country might have "a depression that would curl your hair." Humphrey didn't have enough hair left to curl, but his statement crispered the Eisenhower budget around the edges.

With glad cries, Democrats and Republicans of the conservative right fell on Eisenhower's recommendations with all the vigor of a pack of wolves. Good ol' George had said it was too big, hadn't he? Well, let's get out the ax and take care of this matter.

Taken by surprise, Eisenhower responded with uncertainty. His initial reaction, in January, was that anybody who examined the budget in detail "ought to find a place where they can save another dollar." When members of Congress took this as an open invitation to swing the ax, Eisenhower said he wasn't asking for cuts. But he added that if Congress found places where reductions could be made, he would do his best to live by the results.

The President said that while there was a lot of money involved, "as long as the American people demand, and in my opinion, deserve the kind of service this budget provides, we have got to spend this kind of money." Roused by his advisers, Eisenhower made a television defense of his monetary recommendations. There was, however, no noticeable surge of public opinion to his cause and Congress continued to hack away—with more noise than effectiveness—at the budgetary figures.

Then in a sharp reversal of his course, Eisenhower contributed to the reductions he previously had opposed by announcing he was withdrawing \$1,600,000,000 in military fund requests. Implacably, the House chopped another half billion dollars off this fund.

Reacting to this crisis, Eisenhower called Senate Republican

leaders to the White House and asked them to help him get the money restored. As a result of this conference, gentle, kindly Senator Leverett Saltonstall of Massachusetts, a loyal supporter of the President, undertook this difficult task. Saltonstall was able to enlist in his cause the handsome Democrat from Missouri, Senator Stuart Symington, who had been fighting for a larger air force for years. Together, with the help of Lyndon Johnson, they managed to get the funds restored.

But when the Senate had passed the bill and had sent it to a conference committee of the two Houses, Eisenhower shot the ground out from under his Senate supporters with a letter saying the half billion dollars wasn't needed after all.

This was the field in which Eisenhower's greatest knowledge and interest popularly was supposed to lie. Truman had spent three nights weekly with his budget director, keeping up personally with the finances of the government. But Eisenhower was more disposed to let George Humphrey do it.

When the President ordered five billion dollars cut off the air-force budget early in 1953 he was reported to have turned to Humphrey and to have said: "I hope you know what you are doing, George."

Long before, the Democrats had opened a drumfire of criticism of what they called Eisenhower's "vacillation" and his "lack of leadership." This performance and the subsequent controversy over Sherman Adams's operations as Eisenhower's chief of staff in the White House piled up the kind of ammunition Symington needed in his efforts to get the 1960 Democratic presidential nomination.

Symington subsequently called Eisenhower "little more than a ceremonial chief of state."

"The sad fact is," the Missouri senator said, "that except in those few areas of policy in which he feels a direct and personal interest, Dwight D. Eisenhower is little more than a ceremonial chief of state.

"And because the power of the presidency cannot for long be exercised through a regency, we have been plagued by drifting and indecision that have damaged this country irrevocably."

The Democrats, who had been slow to criticize the President when he first took over the job, began to step up their fire against him when it became apparent after his 1955 heart attack that he would run again.

To a large extent this assault had been directed at Eisenhower's attitude of standing aloof from controversy and, after the heart attack, at the contention he was only a part-time President.

To these charges the Republicans replied that Eisenhower was the ideal commander who kept himself free from petulant details in order to preserve a clear upper-strata atmosphere in which decisions could be made without the liabilities of conflicting personalities. They said no man could be expected to delve into all of the complex details of the presidency.

Eisenhower himself seemed to feel that his principal task was to keep the country on an even keel. He saw no need for revolutionary proposals that would upset domestic tranquillity and disturb the brisk business that was being done in the market place.

The President conceded that, because of his illness, his activities would have to be strictly regulated. He would have to have time for golf and other exercise; he must think of his health and diminish some of his responsibilities accordingly.

Despite these drawbacks, Eisenhower remained tops in popular esteem. As they nearly always did, the people generally remained unaffected by the arguments of the so-called experts in Washington as to whether the President was doing a good job.

It was enough for them that nobody was shooting Americans. It was even better that times were good and they could continue to make the installment payments on the new television, washer-dryer combinations, and the oversized automobile that stood in the drive because it was too large to go into the garage.

In the majority view, the President still could do no wrong, except perhaps to prove himself susceptible to illness such as a heart attack. But a heart-stricken Eisenhower was preferable to the country over any candidate the Democrats had to offer in 1956.

To add to this feeling, the Democrats were laying each other's heads open in a vicious primary scramble for their party's seemingly worthless nomination.

## 16 The Ironic Campaign



Her voice was high-pitched and crackly. Her accent was pure New York State Dutchess County. It was incongruous in the packed, stifling hall. The words that rippled in singsong emphasis were not new nor startling. Yet the magnetism of this tall, ungainly, but magnificent old lady enveloped the shabbily dressed crowd in its warm and caressing embrace.

The reedy voice stilled the shuffle of feet, hushed the throat clearing, made every listener pliable to its every inflection. Before these curious, until then only half-interested, people stood a woman whose works and whose spirit was known to them. Few of them had ever seen her before but every soul there knew her as a sympathetic friend.

Each listener felt, as he bent forward a little to catch the high sibilance of her uncertain tones, that here was a woman who not only preached but practiced equality. To the dark-faced and sometimes forlorn, she was a symbol of hope for the spirit which must battle color and poverty to reach the shining sky so far away.

This was Eleanor Roosevelt at seventy-one, campaigning in a tawdry section of Los Angeles for a man who, she believed, carried high the banner of enlightened liberalism—a man named Adlai E. Stevenson who was engaged in a life-and-death political struggle with Senator Estes Kefauver of Tennessee for the 1956 Democratic presidential nomination.

Four years of Eisenhower in the White House had brought many changes in the Democratic party. No longer reluctant, Stevenson was fighting for a nomination he had tried to spurn in 1952. By now Stevenson was convinced that Eisenhower offered as great a threat to international co-operation and to progressivism at home as Taft could have summoned. He was eager to take on the Republican President but the incredible Kefauver stood in the pathway and was flailing at him with every weapon at hand.

Kefauver, a large raw-boned man who combined a woodsman's instinct for the kill and a politician's ability to charm friend and foe, had been the chief beneficiary of the fickle primaries by which candidates contended for the presidential nomination of their parties.

The average voter thinks of a presidential primary as a means of registering his choice for his party's nomination in advance of the convention where that nomination is made. The voter never stops to think, however, that the man most likely to be qualified for the nomination often is least likely to be able to spare the time away from the job he holds, as governor or senator, to travel all over the country campaigning in primaries.

But Kefauver found the time and he had experience. To begin with, he had licked Boss Edward H. Crump of Memphis, a personally delightful and lovable rascal of politics. Crump had tried to ridicule Kefauver out of the senatorial contest in Tennessee with advertisements likening the candidate to a pet coon. Kefauver's answer was to don immediately a coonskin cap and reply that at least he wasn't Crump's coon. He added, in refuting a Crump-inspired charge that he was politically pink, that "the only thing red about me is my red-headed wife." Nancy Kefauver, a red-headed Scotswoman, was no small asset in her husband's campaigns for the Senate and for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Kefauver represented a strange mixture in politics which seemed to appeal to voters in every section. He was accounted a liberal of sorts and was, in fact, too liberal for his southern colleagues on such issues as civil rights. Nevertheless, he ran well in Florida in the 1952 and 1956 primaries. He had a good mind, with a feel for the common people. He could diagnose the issues of the day and expertly avoid committing himself on those where the majority opinion was not clear.

The Kefauver trial run had been made in New Hampshire in 1952 and surprisingly he knocked off rather easily an old campaigner who didn't get into the state—President Truman. In that primary, Grandma Moses could not have improved on the vividly

colored picture Kefauver painted there for all the wondering nation to see.

The big, long-legged man slogged along the slush on the sidewalk, splattering sprays of snow in the blustery February day. He stopped as he came abreast of a barbershop, turned, and went in, his hamlike hand already extended.

"I'm Estes Kefauver," he said in a surprisingly soft voice. "I'm running for President and I'd like to have your support."

Ol' Estes was making political history, all right. Almost no voter ever had been so importuned personally by a presidential candidate to vote for him. When that happened, what could you do? Naturally you had to vote for the man who had taken the trouble to come around and ask for your backing.

Of course, it was an impossible task that Kefauver set for himself. He couldn't go everywhere and ask everybody to vote for him. He had had what amounted to a head start in his television appearances in connection with the Senate's Crime Investigation Committee, which he headed, but a lot of voters had not happened to catch his show and it was humanly impossible to reach all of them.

Kefauver had made his reputation and had changed the course of campaigning for the nomination in New Hampshire, a state that was not too large geographically and had a relative handful of voters. But he had continued the practice in states like Minnesota and Florida, where the distances were much greater and the population much denser. Now he was campaigning in far-flung California, using the same apparently effective methods, and Stevenson had called in desperation for help from Mrs. Roosevelt.

Kefauver had clobbered Stevenson in the Minnesota voting and while Stevenson had won in Florida, the result was almost a stand-off. Now Kefauver was cutting deep into the Negro and pensioner vote in southern California.

Responding to Stevenson's cry for aid, Mrs. Roosevelt had flown all night from New York to Los Angeles. Minutes after her arrival, she sat down in the lounge of the airport for a news conference.

The gallant lady with the expressive mouth and the incongru-

ously orderly teeth—we who knew her well liked to remember when they were irregular, before they were false—chatted gaily with the correspondents as if she had had a full period of rest. Then she answered, in that soft, patrician way of hers, every tough question that was thrown at her.

From there the amazing woman had scurried from meeting to meeting with Stevenson all day long. Everywhere she was smiling, chirping, speaking, laughing, greeting old friends and making new ones.

Now in this night meeting she was talking Stevenson into the hearts of people who made their votes count on primary day. Because she believed this man held the best possible promise of continuing the social program her husband had inaugurated, because she felt he was right on international policies, this grand old lady was willing to give him one of her crowded days. After this night meeting she would climb aboard a plane, fly all night, and pick up a killing schedule again in New York on the morrow.

If ever a candidate owed his successful bid for a presidential nomination to another, Stevenson owed it to Eleanor Roosevelt in this crucial California primary. Roosevelt was eleven years dead, but the President's lady, without official position, still packed a warm, emotional appeal to the voters who had not forgotten F.D.R. and his works.

As we sat at our typewriters and pounded out the primary voting results as they rolled in, we counted Kefauver out of the presidential-nomination contest. The figures were phenomenal. Kefauver, who had wooed the Negroes and pensioners arduously, lost every ward where those votes were dominant. One day of Eleanor Roosevelt's campaigning unmistakably had convinced the minority that Stevenson was their man. Kefauver, the defeated candidate, quit the presidential-nomination contest.

Four years before, Truman correctly had characterized these presidential primaries as "eyewash." Kefauver had won most of them in 1952 and Stevenson had won the nomination. It was true that Eisenhower had been able that year to hang the "can't win" label on Taft when he defeated the Ohio senator in New Hampshire's voting. Neither that defeat nor those in New Jersey and

other states had removed Taft from the race, but they had damaged his chances.

That was the record of many such primaries—they were the destroyers of candidates. Willkie had quit the contest for a second GOP nomination in 1944 when he was defeated in preliminary voting in Wisconsin and Nebraska. Harold E. Stassen lost his real chance for the Republican nomination in 1948 when Dewey beat him by 10,000 votes in Oregon after a spectacular broadcast debate.

On the other side of the coin, Dewey had won six of eleven primaries in 1944 but Willkie, who didn't enter any of these races, walked off with the party nomination. William Gibbs McAdoo came out on top in ten of fifteen primaries in 1924 but John W. Davis took the Democratic nomination. In 1920, Hiram Johnson was the big primary winner but the GOP convention nominated Harding.

Although Truman once advocated nationwide primaries to name the presidential nominees, Senator Taft had opposed this proposal as impractical. When I asked Taft one day why the people's voice should not be heard in such matters, he raised three-fold objections.

"No man who holds a responsible federal or state office can spare the time from it to campaign in a majority of the states and still do justice to his job," Taft said. "Even if it could be undertaken, the cost of such campaigning would be prohibitive. And no man would have the physical stamina to campaign in states where primaries happened to fall on the same date and have anything left for the general election campaign, even if he won the nomination."

Stevenson, who regarded primaries as being as objectionable, enumerated all of these arguments and added some more. He said that only about twenty-five per cent of eligible voters turn out for primaries. He pointed out that each state sets its own ground rules for such balloting, with no uniformity in binding delegates to vote at the national convention for the winner of such contests.

"Finally," he said, "it is also terribly expensive. It's exhausting

physically. You burn yourself up. You burn up your ammunition. You burn up your means."

Stevenson and Kefauver had been burning up their ammunition at an alarming rate in their running battle from state to state. They also had been piling up ammunition for the enemy by harsh criticisms of each other that the Republicans had only to quote when the two men finally wound up on the same ticket.

When I asked Kefauver why he favored a constitutional amendment which would pave the way for a universal federal primary law, he responded simply and directly, as he always did.

"That's the only way I know of running for President," he replied with a grin.

If it had not been a successful method of gaining the top place on the ticket, it at least made Kefauver a contender to be reckoned with at the August convention when the man who had beaten him in California was to receive a second presidential nomination—this time without the support, and, in fact, with the active opposition of Truman.

To a man who has been President it is always difficult to adjust to the "ex" that precedes his title when he leaves the White House. Because he had wielded great influence over the 1952 convention, Truman saw no reason why his support for an individual candidate should not be decisive four years later—and the years that stretched far beyond that.

The fact that he had passed over the crest of the political hill was lost upon Truman. He was highly respected and his services as a campaigner were valued. But he no longer could command a legion of government-paid supporters; he had no patronage to dispense, no rewards to give, no favors to deny. He had only persuasion left, and it was not enough.

Truman always was good copy and we newsmen gave him extensive coverage when he arrived in Chicago. He would not say then which candidate he had picked, but it required no prophetic powers to be able to write that Truman was "off" Stevenson and probably would plump for Governor Averell Harriman of New York.

All of this would not have made much difference if Stevenson

himself had not stirred up the hornets. Stepping out of the building that housed his offices one day before the convention opened, Stevenson was confronted with a battery of television cameras. Pressed to say something for the crew which had been waiting so long for him, Stevenson agreed reluctantly.

In reply to a question, Stevenson said the party platform that a committee then was in the painful process of drafting "should express unequivocal approval" of the Supreme Court's decision for racial integration in the schools.

This was not essentially different from a hundred statements he had made previously, but the timing was not of the best. Southern delegates had become accustomed to regarding him from their point of view as a "moderate" on the segregation question. Now suddenly he seemed to have gone over to the enemy camp. There were loud demands for the South to look elsewhere in supporting a nominee.

Truman announced at a jam-packed news conference in the Blackstone Hotel—where even the manager of the hotel had difficulty getting in the door of the large banquet room—that he was for Harriman. Praising Harriman's experience, Truman said the New York governor should be able to take over as President "without risking a period of costly and dangerous trial and error." This was a direct slap at Stevenson, the man Truman had supported four years earlier as the best qualified for the White House job.

While we dictated the bulletin on Truman's statement, we reflected a little sadly on the Don Quixote role he had chosen for himself. The aging Harriman had no real chance for the nomination, as all of us newsmen knew. Nevertheless, Truman went on in succeeding days to brand the man who was to be the nominee, Stevenson, with following the "counsel of hesitation." He said the former Illinois governor lacked "the kind of fighting spirit we need to win."

Few were listening to Truman's counsel, as few would listen in future conventions. In this particular endeavor an ex-President was scarcely of more value than yesterday's newspaper. The men who could make their weight felt were for Stevenson and they proceeded to make this clear in no uncertain terms.

At this point the party had a plethora of "favorite sons," all with their antennae extended, waiting for the lightning to strike. Because of Truman's maneuver, each took hope that Stevenson might be stopped and their own chances enhanced. One of these was Governor G. Mennen Williams of Michigan, an ever-ready candidate for the presidential nomination.

But Walter P. Reuther, president of the United Auto Workers (UAW), had had enough of this kind of indecision. As a member, he summoned the potent Michigan delegation into a midnight caucus. In polite but firm language, Reuther made it clear how futile he regarded Williams's bid for the nomination. Choking down his ambitions, Williams agreed. The delegation switched with alacrity and by the next morning Williams was leading the parade of big state groups to Stevenson's headquarters, offering his support. With New Jersey's Governor Robert B. Meyner refusing to join the stop-Stevenson movement and retaining his "favorite son" status, the Harriman balloon was punctured almost before the convention shouting began.

Nominated by 905½ of the convention's 1373 votes, Stevenson pulled an end play calculated to divest himself of the responsibility for hand-picking one of several aspirants for second place on the ticket. To emphasize also the cut-and-dried way in which Nixon was expected to be renominated by the Republicans and to highlight Eisenhower's possible disability, Stevenson announced that the convention itself would be free to select his running mate because "the choice for that office has become almost as important as the choice for the presidency."

It was a wild night that followed. Senators Kefauver, John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts, Albert Gore of Tennessee, and Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota, as well as Mayor Robert Wagner of New York, shuttled between delegation meetings seeking support. At 5 A.M. I came across Kefauver doing a television recording in a corridor of the Conrad Hilton Hotel. Kennedy, rushing to another meeting, tripped over the power wires and almost fell into his rival.

Kennedy had placed Stevenson's name in nomination and it soon became apparent that powerful forces were working for the

youthful Massachusetts senator. At that time, Kennedy, who had recovered from a serious illness growing out of World War II injuries, was a brown-faced, lean, six-footer, who usually looked as though an Italian barber had cut his hair a little shorter than intended. Nearly two decades out of Harvard, he still wore the air of a well-bred, warm-natured college boy.

But there was no mistaking the driving force, hustle, and political fortitude of the young man whose wealthy father was backing, with the cash that talks, the son's bid for second place on the ticket. Besides the million-dollar trust fund which had been handed to him by his parent, Joseph P. Kennedy, there was behind this candidate the political savvy garnered by the elder Kennedy in several top political jobs, including the ambassadorship to Great Britain.

But young Jack Kennedy bore some political burdens, not the least of which was his youth (born May 29, 1917). He had incurred the displeasure of many liberal Democrats, including Mrs. Roosevelt, by declining to take any stand on the issue of the Senate's censure of Senator McCarthy. In the midst of a lengthy illness, Kennedy had missed the vote on McCarthy. Afterward he said the issue had been settled and he saw no reason to resurrect it.

Moreover, Kennedy was a Catholic and because of Al Smith's experience, politicians remained wary of the religious issue. Truman was to confess two years later that, much as he deplored it, he believed a man's religion would figure in his chances for election as President.

Because of all of these factors, it was a strange love affair that sprang up between the southern Democrats and Kennedy, a Yankee Catholic and, to all intents and purposes, an all-out desegregationist.

Long after the convention was over, Kennedy was to continue courting the South with a weaving pattern of voting in the Senate. When the first civil-rights bill since Reconstruction days was before that body in 1957, his voting record pleased no one fully—except perhaps his own conscience—but left him room for friendships on both sides. He voted twice with the South and twice against it on roll calls. In 1959, with the next presidential nomi-

nating convention approaching, he registered his opposition to the Senate's filibuster rule which had impeded the passage of more stringent civil-rights legislation.

All of this record making lay ahead, however, as the 1956 convention squared off for a roaring battle over second place on the ticket.

When the balloting began, Kefauver was a solid favorite because of the strength he had shown in contesting Stevenson in the primaries. There was a sympathy vote, also, from those delegates who remembered his humiliating defeat for the top nomination in 1952. Benefiting by these emotional factors, Kefauver rolled into the lead on the first ballot with 483½ votes. Behind him was Kennedy with 304, a surprising number of which were from the South. Gore had 178, Wagner 162½, and Humphrey 134½.

It was then that the strong hand of Senator Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas showed itself for Kennedy. We who had watched the Texan perform some near-miracles in lining up Senate votes knew immediately this operation ran deep and it could spell real trouble for Kefauver.

Johnson had little difficulty in taking the southern delegations into the camp of Kennedy who, up to that time, was regarded as a "moderate" on civil rights. Few Dixie delegates would vote for Kefauver, who was regarded as a renegade on the issue. As a border-state man, Kefauver was less of a southerner than his Dixie colleagues. He was for progress on civil rights and to punish this rebellion from a state of the Confederacy, the Dixie delegates were perfectly willing to turn to an outlander, even if they were uncertain of his views. The fact that Kennedy was a Catholic made no difference to them, although this was not to say that the Ku Klux Klan was dead. Perhaps it was only sleeping; who could tell?

In any event, Johnson might have pulled off his coup for his young Massachusetts lieutenant if it had not been for a particularly stubborn young governor of Oklahoma.

After Kennedy had jumped into the lead in the balloting, Gore and Humphrey, seeing that their individual causes were hopeless, had kept Kefauver in the running by withdrawing and throwing

their support to him. There was one dramatic moment, however, when Kennedy was so close to the nomination goal that the flop of a single delegation into his ranks would have given him the prize.

At this critical point, Johnson dispatched an emissary to Gary, who had been the lone governor willing to come out in advance in support of Harriman for the top nomination. While Johnson's man pleaded eloquently for the few votes that would put Kennedy across, the solid, Indian-featured Gary listened in stony silence.

Leaning over the huddle around him, I heard the Oklahoma governor reply:

"No, we're not going to do it. Kennedy voted against the farm bill. We need a man in Oklahoma who is for the farmers and Kefauver is our man."

Kennedy's vote months before in the Senate against the provisions of a Democratic farm bill he thought would lead to higher prices for consumers in his state and in the big eastern cities cost him the vice-presidential nomination at this point.

So it was Kefauver, the homespun country boy, who won second place on the ticket with the egghead he had demeaned in the primary campaigns. In the general election battle that was to follow, Kefauver would press the palms of the populace, as he delighted in doing, and Stevenson would outline the major issues.

But the irony of this campaign was not confined to the make-up of the Democratic ticket. As Stevenson confided to the reporters who accompanied him on his travels, he felt that what he regarded as the administration's indecision and drift in foreign affairs was the most vital issue before the country.

However, the Republicans were running on peace and prosperity and it was the judgment of the Democratic strategists that the voters would only yawn through foreign-policy discussions. It had to be, in the minds of these strategists, a campaign in which the Democratic party would run against the popular Eisenhower.

There was some sound reasoning behind this decision and Stevenson had to bow to it. The Democrats had nine new governors to their credit since 1952, as well as the addition of many local officers. They had rewon control of Congress by a slim margin in

1954. The farm belt, where the Republicans had always been strong, seemed to be on the verge of political revolt. They had reason to believe the Democrats were the popular party, even if they despaired secretly of defeating Eisenhower.

So Stevenson was forced into doing what did not come naturally. He toned down his speeches, dispensing with some of the witticisms which had been criticized in 1952, and talked on what he conceived to be the average voter's level.

Of course, he couldn't restrain himself at all points. He couldn't pass up the temptation to say, for instance, that "I'm beginning to think the reason President Eisenhower decided to run again is that he just couldn't afford to retire to that farm in Gettysburg as long as Ezra Taft Benson is Secretary of Agriculture."

As a compromise between his urge to talk about international affairs and his advisers' counsel to stick to domestic issues, Stevenson proposed a halt in hydrogen-bomb tests and substitution of an incentive pay plan to recruit military forces without renewing the draft.

The history of his nuclear-test proposal was as ironical as the campaign had proved to be. Stevenson first broached the subject in a speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors in Washington in April 1956. In October he repeated on television his proposal that the United States take the initiative in announcing its willingness to stop these tests, calling on other nations to do likewise. He said it should be made clear "that unless they did, we would have to resume our experiments, too."

The same sort of proposal had been under study within the administration but since Stevenson had beaten the Republicans to the punch on it, their reaction was vigorous. Eisenhower called the Stevenson suggestion a "theatrical gesture." Vice-President Nixon labeled it "catastrophic nonsense," adding that if it were adopted the country would be "taking a fearful risk with our own security." Governor Dewey said it was an "invitation to suicide."

Twenty-two months later, however, Eisenhower proposed a one-year suspension of nuclear tests, which he said could be continued on a year-by-year basis if the Russians agreed. By then the Soviets had announced their own suspension of tests for what was

regarded in some quarters of the world as a propaganda victory.

Working under wraps, as it were, Stevenson got his campaign off to a bad start. Ironically, the man who was an accomplished and polished speaker sounded as though he didn't know what he wanted to say in his first major television talk, from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, on September 13. Because the prompter from which he was reading skipped and jumped, Stevenson came into the nation's living rooms for all the world as though he were confused in his efforts to put his sentences together and, worst of all, was irritated at the necessity even of talking to the voters.

Few Americans could remember when he was through what he had said in comparison of twenty-eight years of Democratic and twenty-eight years of Republican administrations. Most of them carried in their memories the picture of a man who was befuddled and uncertain.

As the campaign continued, Stevenson dwelt on Eisenhower's physical infirmities, saying that the President never had had the inclination and now lacked the energy for a full day's work in the office. He characterized Nixon as a "man of many masks" and a "shifty" person. Firing back, Eisenhower dismissed his opponent's charges as "wicked nonsense."

Although most regarded his cause as little more than hopeless, Stevenson showed an unexpected resilience in carrying out what he called the "exacting ordeal" of presidential campaigning. There was no doubt about its being an ordeal and Stevenson's own description of a candidate's day in his introduction to *Major Campaign Speeches of Adlai E. Stevenson* can hardly be matched by anyone who has not been a presidential candidate. He wrote:

"You must emerge, bright and bubbling with wisdom and well-being, every morning at 8 o'clock, just in time for a charming and profound breakfast talk, shake hands with hundreds, often literally thousands of people, make several inspiring, 'newsworthy' speeches during the day, confer with political leaders along the way and with your staff all the time, write at every chance, think if possible, read mail and newspapers, talk on the telephone, talk to everybody, receive delegations, eat, with decorum—and discretion—and ride through city after city on the back of an open car,

smiling until your mouth is dehydrated by the wind, waving until the blood runs out of your arms, and then bounce gaily, confidently, masterfully into great howling halls, shaved and all made up for television with the right color shirt and tie—I always forgot—and a manuscript so defaced with chicken tracks and last-minute jottings that you couldn't follow it, even if the spotlights weren't blinding and even if the still photographers didn't shoot you in the eye everytime you looked at them. . . ."

After the show was over, Stevenson said, the next task was to write and edit in the following hours "the next day's immortal mousings, so you can get something to the stenographers, so they can get something to the mimeograph machines, so they can get something to the reporters, so they can get something to their newspapers by deadline time."

Whether this rat race was effective or not, the Republicans were worried and one of their greatest worries centered around what the farm belt might do in the election. Eisenhower settled that question on a warm September day in Des Moines, Iowa.

The President had been to Newton, Iowa, to make a speech at the National Ploughing Contest. He had reminisced appealingly about the difficulties he had encountered as a farm boy in plowing a straight furrow. Bareheaded in the strong sunlight, Eisenhower spoke in generalities to the thousands who gathered there, with none of 1952's talk about 100 per cent parity in the market place. It was the kind of a speech that caused Kefauver to characterize the President as "a master of straight-from-the-shoulder generalities."

We sunburned reporters who had heard Stevenson in action from the same platform the previous day and who tried to interpret the crowd reaction generally agreed that the Democratic nominee had come closer to talking language the farmers wanted to hear.

As we rode behind Eisenhower in the caravan of cars that streaked toward Des Moines, we passed fields where tractors had flattened the corn stocks in compliance with requirements of the soil-bank plan which was coming into operation. Prices were down

and production had gone up, leaving an aura of political uncertainty over the whole agricultural area.

But we hadn't seen anything yet. As the caravan wound its way through the outskirts of Des Moines, spectators in thin lines smiled, cheered, and waved. Just loyal Republicans, and not many of them, we mused to ourselves. It was not much of a turnout, considering the fact that almost every American wants to see his President, if only to be able to tell his grandchildren he was there on the great day.

When the cavalcade reached the main business section, however, the estimates all had to be revised. Des Moines had turned out and it was enthusiastic. A wave of humanity spewed over the police barriers and converged on the President. Motorcycle police, riding beside his car, could hardly force their way through the throng of happy, excited people who pressed in on the smiling, waving chief executive. Perhaps 100,000 persons got a glimpse of the President that day and, emphatically, they liked Ike.

Des Moines, which lives on the farm, had furnished the farm belt's answer.

The truth of the matter was the country was satisfied with the man it had in the White House. Despite all of the Democrats' cries that he was only a part-time President, Eisenhower had proved himself an All-American nice guy in an era when there was prosperity and no war.

No amount of campaigning could have changed the result. There was really very little point to all of the dashing about the country that engaged the opposing candidates. If everybody had stayed home, the outcome would have been the same. But nobody could convince the opposing-party strategists of this. They must, perforce, move their candidates about on split-second timing to take advantage of the last ounce of stamina their nominee could display.

We had an example of this nonsensical urgency in the 1956 campaign that might easily have ended in tragedy. A Stevenson caravan had been scheduled to leave the Roosevelt Hotel in New York at an exact minute for New Jersey, where the Democratic

candidate was to make a brief midafternoon appearance at a country-club gathering of opulent Democrats.

Perhaps the occasion was regarded with more than usual importance because of the previous lack of opulence among the Democrats before whom the party nominee had spoken. In any event, because it was our job to keep the presidential candidate always in sight and to report what happened to him as well as what he said, we reporters were stacked with our typewriters in various units of the nineteen-car caravan that pulled away from the Roosevelt, swung smartly behind police escorts, and proceeded to disrupt New York City traffic.

With sirens screaming, we soon were across George Washington Bridge and bowling down the Jersey Turnpike, the Cadillacs moving practically bumper to bumper at seventy miles an hour. Now reporters' bones are just as fragile as those of the next handy citizen and some of us wished we were back in Washington, writing about the vagaries of Congress, as the turnpike flowed unseen beneath us. As we proceeded on our breakneck way, a poor hound dog attracted by the noise of the sirens ran yelping into the path of one of the Cadillacs and was dispatched to a better world. A police car halted to investigate and its radio carried the sad news to all of us—and through us to the dog lovers everywhere in America—that a canine had sacrificed his life involuntarily for Stevenson. Of course, it really would have been big news if the lead car had blown a tire at that speed and eighteen others had telescoped into it as they surely would have done.

As it turned out, we arrived at the New Jersey country club forty-five minutes ahead of schedule and Stevenson had to make conversation with people he never expected to encounter personally. We went back to New York at forty-five miles an hour, a speed dictated by Stevenson who was thoroughly angry with the local committee and its haste.

Just to keep the record straight, it would be well to say that Eisenhower never was a slow traveler either. The Secret Service might take the President from Washington to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, for instance, at only a few miles over the official speed limit. Some of the reporters following him often had to

hit ninety miles an hour to keep up with the caravan after a red light stopped them or a farm wagon cut across the highway and slowed them down.

No matter how fast or slow he traveled, Stevenson could not get his teeth into the opposition in the 1956 campaign so long as he refrained from talking about foreign-policy matters. So it was natural that, as the climax of the battle neared, he swung into criticism of the administration's international actions. Among other things, he warned that the situation in the Middle East was explosive.

Ironically, when Britain, France, and Israel struck at Egypt's Nasser and his seizure of the Suez Canal, it was Eisenhower—even though he was caught by surprise—who reaped the political benefits from the affair.

Reacting against aggression, even by America's allies, Eisenhower denounced this military adventure. His strong stand, combined with the threat of Russian rocketry, halted the Allies dead in their tracks. If the voters needed any new proof that the Republican President was a man of peace, they now had it.

For those who watched the Washington scene closely, however, there was about this whole performance an air of unreality. Reporters wanted to know why Eisenhower had not acted in advance to prevent three friendly nations from attempting such an ill-starred adventure. The answer was that the nation's chief allies had become so estranged from Eisenhower and his Secretary of State that they had kept their plans a secret. The White House was as surprised by the Suez attack as the citizen who read it in his newspaper.

The extent to which Eisenhower was keeping in personal contact with the Middle Eastern situation came under question at a news conference during the crisis.

Quite accurate reports had come from London that Sir Anthony Eden had pleaded urgently in a message to the President for joint action to mitigate the crisis in Egypt. Eisenhower insisted to us that he knew nothing about any such message.

It developed later that the message, addressed personally to the President, had been held up in the State Department in order not

to "bother" Eisenhower about the matter. The press could wonder, and often did, if other important messages of this kind failed to find their way to the President. But the press had its own opportunity to "bother" the President and it did just that, quite regularly.

## 17 The Press Conference



"That man over there—the one with the shirt on."

President Eisenhower took this offbeat way of designating a shirt-sleeved reporter to ask the next question at a summer day's White House news conference.

It was boiling hot in Washington. The heavy humidity made the atmosphere stifling in the rococo old Indian treaty room on the fourth floor of the then uncooled gingerbread structure across the street from the White House. Some of the more daring reporters had peeled off their coats.

Once these conferences had been held in the President's large oval office in the west wing of the White House but Truman had moved them across the street to the architectural monstrosity that had housed the State, War, and Navy departments but now was even too small to accommodate the overflowing executive agencies under direct presidential control.

Long before the President was scheduled to arrive at 10:30 A.M. the first of the newsmen had begun to form the long line that stretched down the corridor from the treaty room. By the time the doors were thrown open at ten-fifteen, anywhere from 200 to 300 reporters were always on hand.

In the line as it moved slowly into the room, reporters for the press services exchanged gossip with correspondents for the nation's largest newspapers. The representative of the Arkansas *Gazette* might be chatting with the man who wrote for a string of newspapers in India.

A reporter for *Tass*, the Soviet news agency, might be standing a little apart from the others. But he had a perfect right to be there, even to ask questions of the President—though he never did. What the President said would not be subject to censorship, as was all news from Moscow.

This showcase for the presidency remained a peculiarly Ameri-

can affair. No ruler of any other country chose to employ regularly a comparable sounding board. Few would have dared to play on it full key, if he had.

This, in essence, was democracy at work. For in the final accounting the press conference belonged neither to the President nor to the press. It belonged primarily to the American people; it was their open door to the presidency. Through it they could see the moving portrait of the President in action, hear his words as he voiced his thoughts, form their own opinions of how the man they had elected was doing his job.

Here was the principal bar of public opinion where the President's actions and his policies—and those of his executive subordinates—must stand trial.

This was never more dramatically demonstrated than on a warm day in June 1958. An hour of deep political travail had come to the President. Sherman Adams, the chief of his White House staff, his trusted aide and right bower, was under fire in Congress for having accepted costly favors from Bernard Goldfine, Boston industrialist who specialized in gifts to the influential.

Adams had denied he had used his powerful White House position to intervene with government regulatory agencies to gain favors for Goldfine's companies. But the hue and cry in Congress had not been stilled. Republicans, as well as Democrats, were demanding Adams's ouster.

For Eisenhower the situation was a painful one. He owed his election in 1952 and his re-election in 1956, at least in part, to first his promise and then his apparent performance in cleaning up "the mess in Washington." Adams was his almost indispensable assistant. Yet Adams, the keeper of the administration's sanctity, now was being tabbed as no better than the Democrats who had been thrown out.

When he walked into the treaty room that morning from the side door where his secret-service escort always halted, Eisenhower was grim-visaged. Only a perfunctory smile flitted across his face as he said in an unaccustomed low voice: "Ladies and gentlemen, please be seated."

As he drew himself up behind the shiny mahogany desk, with

the great seal of the President of the United States visible over his shoulder on the wall behind him, Eisenhower looked drawn and there were lines on his face we had not seen a week before. He was obviously laboring under a personal strain.

Observing that he had some announcements to make, the President began reading from large cards a statement he said had been made desirable by "the intense publicity lately surrounding the name of Sherman Adams."

Eisenhower began by defining gifts, saying that one could be evil while another might be but a tangible expression of friendship. A gift was not necessarily a bribe, he said with emphasis. Moreover, he continued, the real question was whether there was any "evidence of intent or lack of intent to exert undue influence."

"Anyone who knows Sherman Adams," he read, "has never had any doubt of his personal integrity and honesty. No one has believed he could be bought; but there is a feeling or belief that he was not sufficiently alert in making certain that the gifts, of which he was the recipient, could be so misinterpreted as to be considered as attempts to influence his political actions. To that extent he has been, as he stated yesterday, 'imprudent.'" Adams had used this word to describe his actions in testimony before a House subcommittee.

Eisenhower said he believed Adams had spoken the truth in denying that he had used influence in Goldfine's behalf. Then the President summed up his attitude in words that were to be seized upon by the Democrats for fresh attacks.

"I personally like Governor Adams," Eisenhower said. "I admire his abilities; I respect him because of his personal and official integrity. I need him."

It was evident to all present that Eisenhower believed his defense plea would settle the matter, that the public's verdict would be for Adams, if for no other reason than the President needed him.

Probing questions brought little additional information from the President. There were a few inquiries touching on international matters and promptly as the hands of the clock reached 11 A.M.,

Marvin Arrowsmith of the Associated Press, senior wire-service correspondent present, sang out the quitting signal:

"Thank you, Mister President!"

Into the center aisle piled the newsmen in a pell-mell rush for the door that resembled nothing more than football's ancient "flying wedge."

Out of the door they burst, spewing in two directions on the run for telephone booths that lined the corridors. Popping into the booths, the panting reporters lifted receivers off direct telephone lines to their offices and, almost without catching their breath, began dictating at almost exactly the same instant: "Bulletin: President Eisenhower said today. . . ." In a nearby booth, a radio reporter went directly on the air.

Within seconds the teletypes which carried the news to newspapers, television, and radio networks began clacking out to the world the information that Eisenhower agreed Adams was "imprudent" but that he needed his assistant and Adams would stay—at least for a while.

Thumbing their notes and dragging deeply on their cigarettes, the reporters still would be dictating odds and ends of news while the first bulletins, taken off the American radio, were being dissected in the Kremlin, thousands of miles and an ideology removed.

Whatever might be written or said later interpretively of the President's decision—and millions of words were arrayed in criticism and support of it—the first flush of the tide of news was primarily factual.

The world was told what the President said, how he said it, and what he looked like when he said it.

Through the television and newsreel cameras which had been grinding away in the back of the room during the conference, those who cared to look and listen later had recorded for them not only the words of the President but the sound and inflections of his voice. Every smile, frown, or angry furrowing of the presidential brow was imprinted for the world to see and for history to judge.

By all odds, then, this was one of the supreme tests for any presi-

dent. Through the unique institution of the press conference, he could speak personally and often with the people, who were the source of the great power he was wielding. If he disillusioned or disappointed them, he might find his power dwindling rapidly. Conversely, through the press conference he had an unparalleled opportunity to sell himself and his policies to the people.

Eisenhower at first was wary about dealing with the press. Although he had had wide experience in this field as a military commander, the ground rules were not the same. As supreme commander in Europe, when he met with reporters there was always present the comforting cushion of military censorship and all it entailed.

If the supreme commander's tongue slipped, the censor could repair the damage. If the commander just didn't know the answer, there was always available a dignified retreat to the barracks of military secrecy. There was also the ever-present threat that a recalcitrant reporter's credentials could be lifted.

This was quite a different forum from a presidential press conference in which a pimple on the chief executive's nose—and even, at times, a bowel movement—was page-one copy.

There was not too much surprise among the journeymen of the White House press corps when Eisenhower seemed to be wearing his five stars into his first presidential meeting with the newsmen.

Stalking into the room, he lectured the correspondents on wholly inconsequential matters for about fifteen minutes before announcing he was ready for questions. When the itching, fidgeting reporters got their chance to fire questions, Eisenhower cut them short in fifteen minutes with the announcement that he had an appointment and walked out. He apparently had not heard that he was not dismissed until the cry of "Thank you, Mister President!" Press secretary James C. Hagerty quickly remedied that matter.

Outspoken Mrs. May Craig, representative of the Gannett newspapers of Maine, put into words the reaction of most reporters to that first press conference when she said: "I felt like a G.I. who had been dismissed when the general was through talking."

Under Hagerty's tutelage, Eisenhower soon grew accustomed

to the news conferences and even professed to enjoy the give-and-take of such meetings.

He told us one day that there were questions that at times struck him as being inconsequential or "for some other purpose than just getting information for the public." He added he thought some inquiries were "a little bit more personal than they need to be," but he said he couldn't agree with people who thought the press ought not to "heckle" the chief executive.

"The presidency is not merely an institution . . ." he said. "In the mind of the public the President is . . . also a personality. They are interested in his thinking. They like the rather informal exchanges . . . they believe that the President . . . should be able to speak to the whole country in some way."

"I believe what they want to see is the President probably capable of going through the whole range of subjects that can be fired at him . . . and giving to the average citizen some concept of what he is thinking about the whole works."

At another point, Eisenhower told us: "I don't attempt to play poker with this crowd. I try to tell you exactly what I am thinking at the moment when the question is posed."

There was no doubt that Eisenhower did his best to reply courteously to almost every question, no matter how trifling the inquiry might seem to him.

But the informality was not that of a Roosevelt or a Truman. Eisenhower held the reporters at arms' length, although he had told us during the 1952 campaign, "I hope I never get pontifical or stuffed-shirty with you fellows." But where Roosevelt might have addressed a reporter as "Jim," to Eisenhower he was always "Mr. Jones"—if the President remembered his name at all. Where Truman might sit down at a poker table with the correspondents, Eisenhower preferred other social companions. Even the off-the-record series of White House dinners held for selected members of the press in 1959 were more of a business than a social nature. Their object was to help sell the President's viewpoint.

Although he did not control the questions that were asked, Eisenhower could pick the questioners. Robert Spivack of the *New York Post*, a paper often critical of Eisenhower, once complained

that he had not been able to gain presidential recognition for questions at several conferences. But most of the correspondents felt Eisenhower was not consciously discriminating among them.

Agility and timing were prerequisites for good White House reporters. By agreement, a representative of one of the wire services was recognized for the first question. After that it was catch-as-catch-can. The reporter who was on his feet crying "Mister President" as Eisenhower's voice was dying out on the last syllable of his previous answer might get the nod over others who were a split second behind.

Except for good taste, there were no ground rules for the questions. Eisenhower could not control the inquiries, although he was under no compulsion to answer them. Often, he would say he would not reply to an inquiry, "But I will say . . ." and then proceed to supply an answer. The questions themselves might be sharp around the edges or have their cutting surfaces well concealed.

The era of a specialist had brought many newsmen to Washington who had spent the greater part of their adult lives in reporting specific subjects. Experts on foreign and domestic affairs often asked of the President detailed inquiries in fields where they were far more expert than he.

Although it was palpably impossible for a President to keep abreast of everything that goes on in government, the public could never quite understand why the chief executive didn't have on the tip of his tongue an answer to any legitimate question about the republic's far-flung operations. The dip in public confidence when he couldn't answer was a risk the President assumed in return for the benefits of peddling his ideas and programs. Eisenhower often replied that some matter hadn't been brought to his desk, leaving the implication that he was not always currently informed of what was going on about him.

Although the President kept himself under wraps, he couldn't always control the explosive temper that had gained him a reputation for competence in dressing down any subordinate who might have committed some blunder.

We saw the red mount in his face and heard his voice sharpen

with wrath now and then. One such occasion came during the 1957 battle with Congress over the budget.

William McGaffin, Chicago *Daily News* correspondent, picked a March 27th news conference to ask Eisenhower if the President thought the executive department could make any economies which would help in balancing the budget.

"For instance," McGaffin said, "would you be willing to do without that pair of helicopters that have been proposed for getting you out to the golf course a little faster than you can make it in a car?"

The President flushed, the furrows in his brow deepening under his balding pate. His eyes cold, his jaw set, and his lips straightened in a thin line, he replied:

"Well, I don't think much of that question, because no helicopters have been procured for me to go to a golf course."

"Well—" McGaffin returned to the fray.

"Thank you, that is all," Eisenhower snapped, turning away to signal a reporter in another part of the room for the next question.

Eisenhower obviously regarded the McGaffin question as unfair, but it remained, nevertheless, a perfectly legitimate inquiry. The helicopters had been purchased; there were reports the chief executive would use them to reach Burning Tree golf course. If it had not been for the question, they might regularly have been so employed, although they infrequently were.

The questions, which came from all sides, might range the gamut of world and domestic affairs. Or nearly all might be concentrated on a single subject as they were on February 29, 1956, when 311 of us crowded into the treaty room, or hung over the railings of the balcony high above, to hear Eisenhower's announcement that he would run again.

By and large, the interrogation mirrored the times and reflected the thinking of the people. When the country was prosperous and at peace, there would be fewer critical questions. A President then was likely to enjoy what the opposition party called a "complacent" press.

But let the Russians announce their rocketry lead by firing a sputnik or let the economy turn sour, and the inquiries sharpened,

probing at weak spots in the President's position, at indecision, and at mistakes. It was at such times that Eisenhower was likely to feel, as he once told J. Russell Wiggins of the *Washington Post*, that "some of these fellows are not reporters but district attorneys." The President was likely to forget at such times that he himself had said in 1956 that the questions represented "the kind of thinking that is going on" in the country.

Before Eisenhower appeared before the reporters, a great deal of work had been done by Hagerty to prepare the chief executive for the kind of inquiries likely to be thrown at him in the thirty minutes of the conference.

Hagerty, a bespectacled, broad-jawed, well-thatched Irishman with a winning smile and a puckish sense of humor, had lifted the press secretaryship to its highest level of efficiency. Well trained in two presidential campaigns with Governor Dewey of New York, Hagerty knew the ropes.

From the questions asked of Secretary of State Dulles at weekly conferences and those that came up at his own twice-a-day meetings with reporters, Hagerty supplemented his knowledge of the news with extensive reading of newspapers. He also could call on any department of government for any information he needed.

Assembling all of this information, Hagerty boiled it down to essentials and, while Adams still was in government, went over a summarized version with the President's chief assistant. Adams had an uncanny knack of guessing what the President's answers would be.

After Adams had left office, Hagerty depended on Wilton B. Persons, who, as chief assistant, knew the President's every mood. A frail individual with a winning smile, a soft Georgia drawl, and the ability to make friends with a cigar-store Indian, General Persons was credited with being one of the few in the administration who didn't hesitate to become a "no" man if he felt Eisenhower was about to make a mistake in some policy or action.

After he had touched all of the bases, Hagerty was ready to brief the President intensively on what to expect in the news conference that was about to open.

While the President could be prepared with the information to

answer all conceivable sorts of queries, nobody seemed able to do much about his wandering syntax. Eisenhower's meaning sometimes was so obscure in his unparsed sentences that reporters had to give up.

Reporters are notorious for parodying the peculiarities or pecadillos of Presidents or presidential candidates, so soon there was in circulation among the press corps a parody recasting Lincoln's immortal Gettysburg Address in Eisenhower language. Amazingly typical in its take-off on the President's grammatical construction and characteristic of his attitude on the more controversial issues, the parody began:

"I haven't checked these figures, but eighty-seven years ago, I think it was, a number of individuals organized a government setup in this country. I believe it covered certain Eastern areas, with this idea they were following up, based on a sort of national-independence arrangement and the program that every individual is just as good as every other individual."

"Well, now, of course, we are dealing with this big difference of opinion, civil disturbance, you might say, although I don't like to appear to take sides or name any individuals, and the point is naturally to check up, by actual experience in the field, to see whether any government setup with a basis like the one I was mentioning has any vitality, whether that dedication, you might say, by those early individuals will pay off in lasting values. . . ."

Whatever his difficulties with syntax, Eisenhower was willing, as no President had been before him, to risk direct quotation of his remarks. Here the risk of a slip of tongue is great, since the chief executive's words would be scanned avidly in every chancellery in the world. Hagerty, of course, could issue corrections in an attempt to set right any serious mistake.

But this was a chance Truman and Roosevelt had not been willing to take, except occasionally when they authorized specific quotations. Roosevelt felt so strongly about the matter that he once refused to furnish a congressional committee with a transcript of the text of what had been said at one of his news conferences, on the grounds that any such action would destroy the informality of his give-and-take with the reporters.

Roosevelt had held two such conferences a week. He looked forward to them with the same sort of enthusiasm that Eisenhower anticipated a game of golf; they were stimulating and fun. Roosevelt averaged about 100 meetings a year with the press. Truman managed about fifty a year, but under Eisenhower the annual level dropped to an average of about twenty-five.

The President, of course, could decide when he would hold conferences and when he would not. There had been times during his illnesses when Eisenhower obviously was physically unable to meet the press. There were other lapses, however, that obviously were motivated by presidential pique or reluctance to face questions about some particularly annoying problem to which the answer had not been found.

The editorial writers, the columnists, and the commentators might make it uncomfortable for the President not to hold a conference, but they could not force him to stand before this bar of public opinion if he chose not to do so.

There was no law requiring the chief executive to hold news conferences. In fact, until Woodrow Wilson inaugurated formal meetings with the reporters, coverage of the White House had been sporadic and haphazard.

John Tyler had been one of the first to realize the value to a President of getting his views into the newspapers. Tyler found a favorite reporter in Robert Sutton, correspondent for the New York *Herald*, and gave him many news stories. Sutton's success in thus reporting the presidential activities and views prompted the *Herald* to set up the first Washington news bureau and staff it with reporters, some of whom were paid the then princely wage of twenty dollars a week.

In Lincoln's day, reporters could wander into the White House with other curious citizens who wanted to look the place over and perhaps shake the hand of Old Abe. Today, when Presidents are tightly guarded by the Secret Service, such laxity seems almost unbelievable. Yet there was little attention paid to presidential security even through the era of Theodore Roosevelt.

Gould Lincoln, veteran political writer for the Washington *Star*, relished telling the story of how he was sent one Saturday after-

noon to the White House to check on the facts about a local news development. Finding no one in the executive offices, Lincoln started through the corridor which led to the White House living quarters. When he was halfway up the corridor, a side door opened and out stepped T.R., bundled up in a sweat shirt and fresh from a workout in the gymnasium.

"Hello, young man, who are you looking for?" Roosevelt asked.

"Why, Mr. President," Lincoln replied, not at all abashed, "I was looking for you but you weren't in your office and there was nobody else there."

Obligingly, Roosevelt told Lincoln what he wanted to know and the *Star* had an exclusive Sunday-morning story.

This sort of catch-as-catch-can relationship between the President and the press had gone on for a long time.

Grover Cleveland had issued some press statements during his first term, but when he returned to the White House for a second time he complained that those nuisances, the reporters, were invading his privacy. The New York *World* retorted editorially that "the President is public property"—a truism succeeding Presidents came painfully to recognize. The *World* added that "it is perfectly legitimate to send correspondents and reporters to follow him when he goes on a journey and to keep watch over him and his family."

This now accepted practice was a far cry from the day when James K. Polk had been able to go off for a vacation at Bedford Springs, Pennsylvania, unattended by reporters and his absence from Washington all but unnoticed.

After Cleveland lost his battle for privacy, newsmen set up a form of regular White House coverage in the administration of William McKinley. A half dozen reporters checked McKinley's activities, and the system continued when the first Roosevelt came into office.

The story is told that one dark, gloomy day T.R. looked out of the White House window and saw several sodden, dispirited reporters standing in the rain near the White House gate. William W. Price, an Associated Press reporter, had been the first to

station himself there and to interview presidential visitors as they left. His lead soon was followed by other correspondents.

T.R., who liked the newsmen—except for those who disagreed with him and promptly won membership in his “Ananias club”—immediately ordered a White House anteroom assigned to the newsmen who came in out of the weather and established a foothold in the executive wing they have retained since. The press quarters remained for generations in an inadequate, cluttered little room, overpopulated with reporters, telephones, typewriters, relics of presidential trips, and a usually empty refrigerator.

William Howard Taft held what he liked to call “town meetings” of the correspondents in the White House. Little news came out of them, however, and by modern standards little came out of the White House workdays.

There was time in that era for long, leisurely luncheons and the correspondents were out enjoying one on the day that Taft walked across the lobby of the executive wing to take personally to the newsmen an announcement he regarded as of some importance. Their press room was empty, however, so the President laid his announcement on a desk. When the correspondents came back from their beers, they found it. Taft was announcing the appointment of Charles Evans Hughes as a member of the Supreme Court.

Taft, who had once worked on the *Cincinnati Times*, was a member of the National Press Club and he sometimes waddled over to the Albee Building, a block from the White House, to sit in on a poker game.

But as his relations with Congress deteriorated, Taft soured on the newsmen, whose stories daily became more critical.

When Wilson arrived in office the press was electrified by the announcement the new President would hold news conferences. Wilson was described by contemporary writers as nervous and embarrassed and inclined to be reticent. The new President felt he must have such meetings, however, because he said “a large part of the success of public affairs depends on the newspaper-men—not so much on the editorial writers, because we can live

down what they say, as upon the news writers—because the news is the atmosphere of public affairs."

But Wilson had a temper and he was sensitive, as all Presidents were, to any invasion of what he regarded as his private affairs. When news stories began appearing speculating on the romantic intentions of his daughter Margaret, Wilson exploded. He told reporters this sort of thing had to stop, adding:

"On the next offense, I shall do what any other indignant father would do. I will punch the man who prints it in the nose."

Wilson continued his news conferences for years despite the fact that he sometimes talked out of turn and regretted it. At times, his fault was, as he put it, that "I did not stop to think how this would sound in the newspapers." When Wilson fell ill, his news conferences lapsed and it was with an air of relief and expectancy that the correspondents greeted Warren G. Harding.

Harding had a newspaper background as the publisher of a small-town daily. He was an easygoing gladhander who never forgot a name or a face. He had shown a willingness during the "front porch" campaign to take on all questioners and he had made the newsmen feel he regarded them as his pals.

Walker S. Buhl, chief of the Washington bureau of the Cleveland *Plain Dealer*, often told the story of how Harding walked in unannounced at a meeting of the "Order of the Elephant, Local No. 1, Marion, Ohio." The reporters had formed this organization to relive the memories of the "front porch" campaign. The cups were flowing freely on that night and Harding joined in the fun as just one of the boys.

The aura of good feeling and of casual repartee did not last long, however. Harding's ignorance of a great many subjects was vast. During the Washington naval conference he threw the State Department for a serious diplomatic loss by telling a news conference a treaty then under negotiation would not permit Japan to maintain defenses on her home islands. When the Secretary of State had to make it clear the President was wrong, Harding instituted a new rule that all press-conference questions would have to be submitted in written form and in advance.

Dour Calvin Coolidge kept this rule and took full advantage of

it. While he retained the two-a-week conferences, about the only questions he answered were those dealing with Washington parks or some other non-controversial subject. After Coolidge had said "I do not choose to run" for re-election, reporters tried for weeks to get an elaboration to confirm their almost unanimous judgment that the President wanted to be drafted for another nomination. Framing up on Coolidge one day, they all submitted identical questions designed to throw some light on this matter. Shuffling calmly through the written queries, Coolidge laid them down with a sly smile and launched into a fifteen-minute discussion of the condition of the children of Puerto Rico.

If they had been disappointed in Harding and frustrated with Coolidge, the newsmen had high hopes in Herbert Hoover. As Secretary of Commerce, Hoover had made his office a mecca for reporters. A great deal of the news of the Harding and Coolidge administrations had originated in informal, off-the-record meetings there. But when Hoover took over the White House, his relationships with the newsmen underwent a change. Where he had been jovial, knowledgeable, and informative, he now became cold, distant, and sensitive to criticism. He maintained the Coolidge system of requiring written questions and passing up the difficult ones.

After Hoover, Roosevelt II changed the order swiftly. Where Hoover had been timid, Roosevelt was confident he could cope with the press on a give-and-take basis. He abolished the written questions but retained the prohibitions against direct quotation of his remarks, except where specific permission had been given.

Perhaps the quickest and best phrasemaker who ever inhabited the White House, F.D.R. was a President after a newsmen's heart. He talked in headline phrases. He acted, he emoted; he was angry, he was smiling. He was persuasive, he was demanding; he was philosophical, he was elemental. He was sensible, he was unreasonable; he was benevolent, he was malicious. He was satirical, he was soothing; he was funny, he was gloomy. He was exciting. He was human. He was copy.

Roosevelt, who fought the editors, liked the journeymen of the press well enough to invite them once a year to enter the front

door of the White House for a press reception that rivaled in attendance the biggest social affairs of the season. There were kegs of beer in the front hall and dancing in the Blue Room, with long-legged Eleanor striding about, keeping things going at a lively pace.

The liveliest show, however, was the Roosevelt press conference. When the doors leading to his oval office were opened, reporters swarmed in to cluster about his desk and stand in deep rows filling the room. The old-timers could judge by the tilt of the presidential cigarette holder the mood of this Barrymore of Presidents. If the smoking cigarette pointed to the ceiling, his head was back and there was a smile on his expressive lips; things were going well and it would be a conference replete with humorous asides while he was delivering some news he regarded as favorable. If the cigarette drooped and the lips were set in a downward curve, look out for storms.

These conferences were informal. Whereas the reporters stood, tried to gain recognition from Eisenhower, stated their name and the medium they were representing, the correspondents fired their questions at Roosevelt without any identification of the source. Just as with Truman and Eisenhower, each reporter in the room had been fingerprinted and photographed by the Secret Service and his record investigated as a part of presidential security precautions. Roosevelt knew most of his questioners and did not need to have them identify themselves by name.

Anything could happen at these news conferences—and usually did. Roosevelt chose one of them to toss his “horse and buggy” phrase at the Supreme Court. At another he fished out a German iron cross and handed it to a reporter to deliver to John O’Donnell of the New York *Daily News* for what Roosevelt said were O’Donnell’s services to Hitler.

O’Donnell had angered the President by writing truthfully that the Senate was about to hear charges Roosevelt was allowing the navy to convoy ships to England at a time when the country still was trying to avoid involvement in World War II.

When the great presidential actor died, the news conferences with his successor followed the same informal form, but the con-

trast was sharp. When Harry Truman planted his feet apart and stood behind the Roosevelt desk, bracing himself for questions at his first White House news meeting, a new era had begun. Truman was a plain man of the people, refreshingly humble about his abilities. There were no fancy phrases, no neat footwork, no histrionics.

As he became more accustomed to his job, Truman grew in confidence and cockiness. And he could be unbelievably casual at times in tossing off world-reverberating news.

One such occasion came on his September 1945 trip to Carutherville, Missouri, to attend the county fair where he had always opened his senatorial election campaigns. Truman was at home with the good, plain country folk there and the Missourians liked this new President who mingled with the throngs, gave his autograph freely, and was the despair of the Secret Service men who were trying to protect him. It had been more than twelve years since a President had walked the streets, rubbed elbows with a crowd.

Enjoying himself immensely, Truman journeyed from the fair to a fishing lodge at Realfoot Lake, near Tiptonville, Tennessee. His faithful shadows, the reporters, were quartered six miles away at Samberg, Tennessee. Charles G. Ross, who had become Truman's first press secretary, served as the line of communication between the President and the press.

Ross, a lean, weather-beaten veteran of reporting political wars, drove over each morning to tell the correspondents what the President was doing and how his fishing luck was. At the conclusion of one of those conferences Ross announced the President was inviting the newsmen to join him that night to sit around and chin a bit. Ross warned solemnly that everything would be off the record—not to be written or passed along—including the fact they were going to the President's lodge.

"Charlie, do we have to shave?" a reporter asked.

"Oh, no," Ross replied, "just come over the way you are."

When they arrived at the lodge that night, the newsmen found Truman surrounded by some old cronies who were singing in bourbon-mellowed voices the lyrics of "I'm Just Wild About

Harry." The President and the reporters retired to the lodge porch to sample the bourbon there.

After a while Truman observed casually, "I suppose you boys would like to have a news conference?"

Putting their glasses down, the correspondents agreed they would like a news conference, even at this unlikely spot, thirty miles from the nearest telegraph line at Union City, Tennessee. Backing into a corner, Truman signaled the start of questioning.

"Mr. President," asked a reporter, "have you made up your mind what we're going to do about the atomic bomb?"

"Yes," Truman replied firmly, "we're going to keep it."

Here, developed by further questioning, was the world's answer as to whether the United States would share the secret know-how of fashioning the greatest explosive force then existent.

Ross was aghast at the possibility the President was shooting from the hip and would regret it. Peering over the shoulders of the reporters, the press secretary inquired anxiously:

"Mr. President, are you on or off the record?"

"Charlie," Truman replied, "I'm on the record."

At this moment the reporters started to break for their parked cars nearby.

"Hey, wait a minute, you guys," Truman called. "I invited you over for a little social visit and now you're running out on me."

Halting momentarily, the reporters explained hurriedly they felt they must get their stories off. They compromised by agreeing to come back as soon as their job was done. Then began the mad dash to Union City to tell the world the United States was not sharing the secret of the A-bomb.

They left behind a highly amused President and a press secretary who was learning the hard way that it is difficult to control the actions of a President. Always afterward it was Ross's attitude that "You can't argue with the President." But, then, Ross never climbed the ladder to power as Hagerty was to do under Eisenhower.

## 18 The Eyes of Argus



The small, neatly appointed room off the main lobby of the White House was packed with reporters. Behind the large desk in the corner a bespectacled, dark-haired man of medium height stood at bay before men and women correspondents banked in uneven rows before him. On the wall to his right, between two windows where Venetian blinds filtered the view of the driveway to Pennsylvania Avenue, hung a smiling picture of President Eisenhower in golf attire.

James C. Hagerty, with his pair of sometimes nagging ulcers, was meeting the press as he did twice on each full working day as the President's press secretary.

The crowded room in which he stood represented the fountain-head of most of the daily news of the presidency. The President himself answered questions for thirty minutes once a week—on weeks when he was not otherwise engaged, or did not feel like meeting the press. But much of the public knowledge of the presidency came out of this room.

It was, of necessity, secondhand news, since the reporters seldom saw the President do the things—and almost never heard him say the things—that Hagerty said the President did or said. Because of this, Hagerty, as the administration's high priest of information, carried on his broad shoulders a great deal of the responsibility for the portrayal of the chief executive's stewardship to the people who had elected him.

This responsibility—unique in the sense that no other nation had an official who quite equaled Hagerty in authority—carried with it tremendous power. It was a power so great that at one point the press secretary was in fact, if not in name or by self-admission, acting President. It was a power that permitted its bearer to use the editorial "we" when speaking of the presidency. It was a power that could be abused—but seldom was.

This power had not existed when Hagerty first began his operations in the White House. Certainly, stout Steve Early had been one of the few with the trepidation to tell Roosevelt "no." Certainly, Charlie Ross had had Truman's confidence. But neither of these had gained the stature of authority to speak for the President that was Hagerty's. This authority was not something defined in the Constitution or the laws and it was gained gradually.

When Eisenhower first moved to the White House, he had occasion one day to call in his press secretary to dress him down for what the President regarded as a boner. Hagerty got the full military treatment from the general, but the press secretary stood his ground without flinching and argued back. When the President found this underling standing up to him, he halted midway in his harangue to say admiringly:

"Well, you don't scare easy!"

From that point there developed between Eisenhower and Hagerty such a warm relationship that when he was struck down by a heart attack three years later, the President told his physician, "You tell Jim for me to take over."

For all practical purposes Hagerty then became an acting President, in that he was the only link between the chief executive, who was confined to his hospital bed, and the outside world. Vice-President Nixon and Cabinet members learned of the President's condition only through Hagerty. It was not until the press secretary gave the word, after personal consultation with the doctors, that any of them dared bring any official business to the attention of the stricken President. If Hagerty made no policy decision—and he avoided any appearance of doing so—none was made at the presidential level.

Frank Holeman and Jerry Greene, correspondents for the New York *Daily News*, summed up the views of many of their colleagues when they wrote from Denver, where the President was ill, that "Hagerty has in effect been acting President of the United States for the last six days."

"Jim hasn't been just a press representative," they continued, "he has been the only individual connected with the Administration for the last week who has been able to get in instant and

personal touch with the President. You still don't make a move without calling Jim."

Robert Riggs of the Louisville (Kentucky) *Courier-Journal* wrote that during the period of the heart-attack convalescence "virtually all the vast authority of the presidency seemed to have been transferred, by some means not made clear, to the hands of the press secretary."

From this point it was natural for Hagerty to move into a relationship in which he, as the administration's most frequent spokesman, assumed a partnership attitude toward the presidency. We reporters noted that as time progressed, more often than not Hagerty's reply to questions began: "We intend to. . . ." or "Our answer to that is. . . ."

There was an outstanding example of this togetherness on the day that Senator Everett Dirksen, Illinois Republican, developed a nosebleed on a flight with Eisenhower to Chicago. Trying to straighten out some garbled information, a correspondent asked Hagerty if Eisenhower had had a nosebleed.

"Oh," Hagerty said, "you thought it was us, huh? No, it was Senator Dirksen."

As he conceived it, it was Hagerty's job at all times to see to it that the President was presented in the most favorable light, no matter what the circumstances. And he went to extraordinary lengths to accomplish this end.

Hagerty's efforts in this field were illustrated in a small way one day in March 1958 when Explorer II had been blasted off and the country was waiting to hear if this second attempt to launch a baby satellite had been successful. A reporter asked how the announcement of the success or failure of the attempt would be made.

"If it's in orbit we'll announce it," Hagerty said.

But, the reporter asked, suppose it weren't in orbit? Then the reporters would have to look to Cape Canaveral or the Defense Department for the announcement, was Hagerty's reply. Eisenhower would be personally identified with a successful launching; if there was failure, it would be announced elsewhere.

This process of protecting the President was one that had grown

up in the twentieth century-as a counter to the press criticisms that had plagued Presidents from the beginning of the republic.

In the fifth year of his presidency, when a political storm had blown up almost overnight over his record peacetime budget of seventy-two billion dollars, Eisenhower told us at a news conference that the criticisms leveled at him were "weak and inconsequential" compared to those which had been aimed at George Washington in his second term.

Up to that time Eisenhower had enjoyed a press generally more favorable than any preceding President. With minor exceptions, the five-star general of the army could do little wrong in his first four years in office. There was editorial agreement that the Republican President had ended "the mess in Washington" and had swung the pendulum back toward the conservative side.

With some mighty efforts, and some misadventures, he had balanced the budget. He had kept a firm hand—perhaps too firm, as it turned out later—on defense expenditures. He had quieted the uproar over the Communists-in-government issue. While he acted as a conservative, he had clothed the liberal element of the Republican party with hope by proposing various cautious advances in social legislation.

But suddenly the President could do no right. The wine of discontent fermented quickly. He had hardly decided that he must send federal troops to Little Rock, Arkansas, to enforce a Court order for school integration there than the Russians gave America's pride and complacency its rudest jolt since Pearl Harbor by becoming the first to launch artificial satellites into space.

The firing of the Russian sputniks, which brought the "missile gap" controversy to the front pages, found Eisenhower not disturbed "one iota" about Soviet progress in the development of nuclear-headed intercontinental missiles that might destroy an American city from afar. Pressed at a news conference as to why he had not pushed the American missile program more diligently, Eisenhower told us that "I have provided to the limit of my ability the money . . . asked for and that is all I can do."

Administration officials engaged themselves temporarily in a game of belittling the Russian accomplishments and when that

didn't work, they fell back on the charge that it was the Truman administration's fault that the United States was behind. Truman could not evade a share of the blame for America's late start, but Democrats could point to the fact that Eisenhower had reduced by 300 million dollars the billion-dollar outlay Truman had proposed in his final budget for scientific research. And they could cite a twenty-five per cent further reduction in this amount in June 1955.

Finally aroused by the continuing reaction to the Soviet advances, Eisenhower attempted to reassure the country in a series of "chins up" speeches. Long before, Hagerty had taken steps to see to it that the President put his best foot forward in this sort of television-radio appeal to the country.

It was television producer Robert Montgomery's job to stage manage such shows. Montgomery saw to it that the President's balding head was powdered to remove the shine. He fussed with the lighting, the props, and the positions of the cameras. He and Hagerty saw to it that Eisenhower was on hand in plenty of time so that he could relax and appear composed on the broadcast.

After his campaign experiences, Eisenhower didn't care for prompting devices by which a speaker could read his lines from a box on the camera or nearby. Instead, the President donned his glasses to read a script that had been rewritten several times and pared to fit the allotted period on the air. Where the President was to take off his glasses to emphasize the spontaneity of what he was saying, that portion of his script was printed in outsize type he could read without his spectacles.

But Eisenhower was rated as only a moderately successful performer on television and radio. While he was able to project some of his earnestness and sincerity on the air waves, he never seemed to summon the inspirational appeal that had helped Franklin Roosevelt muster the strength of the people behind the presidency in any crisis.

In the successive battles over the budget, the controversy over missiles, and the arguments about how to bring the country out of the economic recession of early 1958, Eisenhower became the target for what sympathetic columnist David Lawrence called a

"smear" campaign. Senator Robert Kerr, Oklahoma Democrat, said the President had "no brains" about monetary matters. Senator Wayne Morse, Oregon Democrat, compared Eisenhower to a certain discredited labor leader. A Democratic member of the House called the President a "lousy liar."

The Democratic party's official organ harped on the President's times out for golf, and his frequent absences from Washington became a political issue. Some editorial writers and many columnists pictured him as a "part-time" President, who permitted his staff to take care of the day-by-day operation of the government and who was hazy about the details of important policies.

In this era the Washington cocktail-party jokes reflected widespread feeling in the capital, if not in the country itself, that Eisenhower was not devoting sufficient energy to his job—that he was more interested in golf and bridge than a President had a right to be.

There had always been jokes about who was running the government and about the amount of time Eisenhower devoted to golf. These developed a cutting edge in the aftermath of the missile controversy.

A typical example had Secret Service men hurrying up to a golf foursome in the middle of a fairway to exclaim: "Would you gentlemen mind allowing the President's party to play through? The Russians have just bombed New York."

To deal with this kind of backdoor attack, Hagerty strove to present Eisenhower as a working President. It was noticeable that when the chief executive went to Augusta, Georgia, for a golfing vacation, the press secretary nearly always managed to arrange for some important pronouncements to be made there to emphasize that Eisenhower was working, as well as playing.

It is nonsense, of course, that a President—who can be the hardest working man in the world—shouldn't be able to take time off to relax without being criticized for doing so. But there is no accounting for the amount of nonsense that enters into politics and becomes regarded as a fact of life.

Eisenhower was learning, as George Washington had, that the second term of the presidency usually is a time of declining popu-

larity. This was particularly true in the case of the modern President, who lacked the protection afforded by the opportunity to run again and thus could offer no threat of reprisals.

It was rather evident that one of the reasons why Washington did not run for a third term lay in the press criticism raised against him by the very persons whom he had praised as the vendors of ideas that would "preserve liberty, stimulate the industry and meliorate the morals of an enlightened and free people."

Washington was particularly incensed by editorial comments that he acted like a man who wanted to be king. He stormed to his Cabinet that he would rather go back to his farm than become emperor of the world. Thomas Jefferson noted that the first President was "extremely affected by the attacks made and kept up on him by the public papers."

That Washington was highly sensitive to criticism and wished to avoid it when he could was demonstrated in his explanation of why he felt he could not appoint his nephew, Bushrod Washington, as a federal judge. In this connection, the first President wrote:

"My political conduct in nominations, even if I were uninfluenced by principle, must be exceedingly circumspect and proof against just criticism, for the eyes of Argus are upon me, and no slip will be passed unnoticed that can be improved into a supposed partiality for friends or relatives."

He added that some newspapers were "indecently communicative of charges that stand in need of evidence of their support."

The American press, struggling up from the mire of vituperation with which it had plastered the early Presidents, grew tortuously in stature and integrity until it attained the eminence of the fourth estate. As the advocate of the people in the halls of government, it fought a continuing battle for the right of the public to know what its servants were up to, as well as its freedom to report their doings in detail. Between Presidents, who desired to work in their own way for what they conceived to be the country's best interests, and the press, which was determined to turn the floodlight on every presidential action, there could be no lasting comity.

Jefferson proved this quickly when he became President. As a severe critic of the 1798 Alien and Sedition laws, Jefferson had been regarded as a great exponent of a free press. He once wrote Edward Carrington ". . . were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate for a moment to prefer the latter."

Yet, in the presidency, Jefferson winced at the gaff of editorial criticism. As attacks mounted against him in his second term, he noted that "the artillery of the press has been levelled against us. . . ." He said bitterly at another point, "Nothing can be believed that is seen in a newspaper . . . the man who never looked into a newspaper is better informed than he who reads them; inasmuch as he who knows nothing is nearer the truth than he whose mind is filled with falsehoods and errors."

Down through the years Presidents continued to chafe at press criticism. Herbert Hoover found such attacks were part of the "hair shirt" he had to wear as chief executive. Franklin Roosevelt classed eighty-five per cent of the newspapers in what he called the "tory" press. He said some columnists were wrong twenty per cent of the time but most of them were wrong eighty per cent of the time.

Truman found the reporters he dealt with honest but contended that many of their bosses had "their own special interests and the news is often slanted to serve those interests. . . ." He criticized what he called "distorted editorials and slanted headlines," adding there was "outright misrepresentation" by many columnists.

Naturally, anything critical was regarded by a President as involving misrepresentation of his ideas, policies, and actions. In this Eisenhower was no different from any other chief executive, except that he usually refrained from expressing his displeasure personally and delegated this task to Hagerty.

Eisenhower's reaction to criticism was to withdraw from the press and make himself relatively inaccessible to direct questioning. The once-a-week press conferences, started with a fanfare in 1953, dropped to a total of twenty-one during all of 1958. With Eisenhower keeping the curtains draped much of the time over

this window through which the American people could peer at him and his activities, Hagerty became at times a source, rather than merely a pipeline, for news.

In press-conference lapses, some of which lasted for as long as two months, it was Hagerty who answered or fended off questions about the most important newsmaker in the nation. The press secretary's translation of the chief executive's views and actions left the correspondents bereft of their own interpretations of the President's state of mind, of the trend of his current thinking, and of the shape of his hopes and aspirations.

It must be said that Hagerty usually was patient and obliging in trying to fill in the gaps. The press secretary understood the need for probing, searching questions directed at him by reporters seeking every scrap of news about a President they saw less regularly than they had in the past.

Once in a while, of course, Hagerty blew his top, such as the memorable instance when the White House press regulars, reinforced with other reporters, flew to Paris late in 1957 to cover Eisenhower's activities at the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) conference.

The meeting had been advertised as the free world's top-level effort to revive its unity in the shadow of the Russian sputnik launchings. Although he was not fully recovered from a mild stroke suffered a few weeks earlier, Eisenhower elected to attend to dramatize the importance of the affair.

About 1700 correspondents from all quarters of the globe descended on Paris. The American reporters soon made it evident they were frankly more interested in the President's health than they were in the results of a conference unlikely to produce any startling news.

Because of the conference rules, reporters could see the President only at a relative distance. They noted at times he looked tired. When he ducked a conference function and went to bed early one night, it was almost an international incident.

Through the President's three illnesses, Hagerty had answered with unaccustomed frankness questions reporters never would have presumed to ask in the days when Presidents tried to main-

tain the fiction that they had private lives. The result was that newsmen often pecked away at the press secretary with inquiries bordering on the banal.

Art Buchwald, Paris columnist for the New York *Herald Tribune*, caught the flavor of this in a humorous column his colleagues of the press generally thought was aimed at them. Buchwald wrote, with tongue in cheek, that an otherwise unidentified "Jim" had reported at a midnight news conference "for reporters who couldn't sleep" that the President had gone to bed at 11:06 P.M. "Jim" added that "as far as I know, he's asleep until morning."

Buchwald proceeded to drive the needle in with this sort of parody on the question-and-answer series:

"Q. Jim, whose idea was it for the President to go to sleep?

"A. It was the President's idea. He was tired and decided to go to sleep.

"Q. Did Sherman Adams or Dr. Snyder or the President's son suggest that he go to sleep?

"A. As far as I know the President suggested the idea himself.

"Q. Jim, did the President speak to anyone before retiring?

"A. He spoke to the Secretary of State.

"Q. What did he say to the Secretary of State, Jim?

"A. He said, 'Good night, Foster.'

"Q. And what did the Secretary of State say to the President?

"A. He said, 'Good night, Mr. President.'

"Q. The Secretary didn't say, 'Pleasant dreams?'

"A. Not to my knowledge."

When Hagerty read the Buchwald column, he was furious. By transatlantic telephone he routed Robert J. Donovan, head of the *Herald Tribune* Washington bureau out of bed to storm at the injustice the press secretary felt had been done to him. Hagerty then called a news conference in Paris to denounce Buchwald's column as "unadulterated rot." Eisenhower himself was reported to have laughed when he read the column and to have advised Hagerty, "Simmer down, Jim, simmer down."

Non-American reporters were bewildered by the incident. American correspondents got no public explanation from Hagerty about his sudden exposure of a sensitive nerve he usually kept

concealed. The favorite version of his administration colleagues was that the press secretary had regarded the column as a slight, aimed at Eisenhower's mental processes.

Hagerty's usual patience sometimes wore thin when sharp-eyed reporters penetrated the protective fence the press secretary tried to keep intact against other types of criticism of the President. Often these involved only relatively minor matters but Hagerty's reaction was instinctive even then.

Correspondents who had twiddled their thumbs for days at Thomasville, Georgia, while Eisenhower had been kept indoors from the hunting fields by bad weather, noted when the President finally emerged that he handled his shotgun carelessly when photographers crowded about him as he was about to depart on a quail hunt.

The President, posing for pictures, sat in a hunting surrey with his 20-gauge, double-barreled shotgun between his knees, muzzle pointed toward his face. This broke all safety rules and, for a military man supposed to be adept at handling guns, it was hardly excusable. When stories popped out all over the newspapers, Hagerty came up with the explanation that the gun was not loaded.

The flurry over this incident had hardly subsided when Hagerty plowed into controversy with the reporters over Eisenhower's decision to fly the presidential plane from Thomasville to take Mrs. Eisenhower, her sister, and a friend to Phoenix, Arizona, for a health-farm visit there and then to fly on to Washington alone. This prompted questions as to why a government-owned plane should be flown on a 3000-mile detour to deliver three ladies to a resort area.

Hagerty blew his temper at Lawrence Burd, White House correspondent for the *Chicago Tribune*, who had instigated the questioning.

"Now Mr. Burd," Hagerty said angrily, "I think when the President of the United States wants to go any place that he wants to with his wife, that is his business and nobody else's."

Burd replied that he had the right to make the inquiry, to which Hagerty retorted he thought the reporter was "getting a little out

of bounds with your question." Burd said he wasn't and there rested the matter of what kind of censorship, if any, Hagerty could exert over the inquiries fired at him.

The question-and-answer sessions, of course, were only a small part of Hagerty's range of activities. Subject to some supervision by Sherman Adams, the press secretary had an almost free hand in many of his operations. He lent invaluable assistance, for instance, to Leonard W. Hall, then the Republican National Chairman, in Hall's successful drive to get Eisenhower into the race for a second term after the President's heart attack.

The doctors' report on the President's condition after his ileitis operation bore some unmistakable signs that the physicians had conferred with Hagerty and were willing to go to much greater lengths than they would have with an ordinary patient in forecasting Eisenhower's complete recovery.

When Adams had left the White House, Hagerty stepped out even further on his own. He took it upon himself in February 1959 to define as a temporary absence the announcement that Secretary Dulles was taking an indefinite leave to undergo surgery for a hernia condition.

His eagerness to discount any necessity for changes in the administration's foreign affairs line-up led Hagerty to say that "there is no sign whatsoever of anything malignant" in Dulles's illness. Six days later it was announced Dulles had had a recurrence of the cancer which first had been disclosed in a December 1956 operation.

Hagerty's assumption of quasi-presidential prerogatives had led the press secretary into difficulties before. Much sought after as a subject for television or radio panel shows, Hagerty obliged with frequent appearances on these media. In one of these he tossed off the opinion that the only thing necessary to get the United States and Russia together for a summit conference on the world's troubles was an agreement on what would be discussed by the heads of state.

This distinctly was not Dulles's idea at the time. Dulles had made it clear there must be prior and fertile spadework at lower diplomatic and foreign-minister levels before the President would

consent to meet with Russian Premier Nikolai Bulganin and Soviet Communist party chief Nikita Khrushchev, who later succeeded Bulganin as Premier.

Dulles was half a world away, attending a Baghdad Pact conference in Ankara, Turkey, when Hagerty's words hit a bewildered State Department with hurricane force. Was Hagerty reflecting the views of the President, puzzled officials asked themselves? Dulles, who could have settled the matter by a simple telephone call to the White House if he had been in Washington, cabled to learn the score.

A subsequent explanation by Hagerty that he had no intention of modifying the position taken by Eisenhower and Dulles served to smooth the situation over. But it did little toward altering the circumstances in which an official charged primarily with relaying and reflecting the President's views had come to be regarded—rightly or wrongly—as a contributor in his own right to policy making.

Although he consciously tried to avoid in public any such appearance of dabbling in policy, there seemed little question that Hagerty influenced the shaping of many policies, if for no other reason than that he was the administration's recognized expert on the reception the public would give those policies. The *U. S. News and World Report* said, in this connection, that sometimes in White House meetings Hagerty had "silenced Cabinet members with a shake of his head."

"His nod gives affirmation to important pronouncements by administration officials," the magazine said.

If he sometimes was able to influence policy and if he sometimes could color favorably the reports about the administration, at other points Hagerty found himself helpless to shape the news, withhold it, or even to soften the impact.

It was such an occasion when the press secretary was called upon to defend Adams from thrusts aimed deep at the administration's reputation for morality.

The ordinarily smiling and debonair Hagerty was on the scowling defensive this day as the reporters pressed their questions about a letter Adams was sending chairman Oren Harris of the

House subcommittee on Legislative Oversight. In it Adams acknowledged that he had permitted Bernard Goldfine, the Boston industrialist, to pay large hotel bills for him but denied that he had asked any government favors for his friend.

The press secretary was a man with his hands tied behind his back. He was defending Adams without knowing that the White House chief of staff had accepted the loan of a \$2400 oriental rug for his home, that the Goldfine-paid hotel bills had run to more than \$3000, and that Adams also had received a vicuña coat generally estimated as worth \$700. Nor could Hagerty foresee that Adams would testify before the Harris subcommittee and would hold the only news conference he ever had in the White House.

In the course of a trying half hour, Hagerty explained that Eisenhower had seen Adams's letter to Harris, had talked over the matter with Adams, and "he thinks the facts . . . are down on paper. That's all there is to it."

"Does the President feel that this jeopardizes Mr. Adams's usefulness to him?" a reporter asked.

"Not at all," Hagerty replied firmly.

"Does the President have any view on the propriety of staying in an assortment of hotel rooms in Boston?" another reporter asked.

"The President thinks the facts as outlined by Governor Adams are the facts and thinks that the letter should be sent and made public," Hagerty dodged.

When a correspondent asked if it was fair to summarize the situation by saying that "Sherman Adams feels that he has done nothing improper and President Eisenhower feels that he has done nothing improper," Hagerty's reply was:

"I think that is a fair summary."

The press secretary, as usual, was putting the best possible light on the incident. He knew, without being told, how desperately Eisenhower desired to avoid losing the services of his chief assistant. But all of Hagerty's skill could not save the man who, as captain of the palace guard, had wielded power second only to the President himself.

## 19 The Palace Guard



The solemn-faced little man was reading a statement in a dry, crisp voice. The caucus room in the House of Representatives office building was crowded with the curious who had come to see an unhorsed crusader badgered by political critics long frustrated by their inability to bring him publicly to bay. The curious came also to stare at the gray-haired, blue-eyed little New Englander who for more than five years acted for a President whose instructions to nearly all of the administration's highest officials were, "Clear it with the Governor."

Sherman Adams, former governor of New Hampshire and now the chief of Eisenhower's White House staff, read carefully in his bass voice from a statement printed on the duplicating machines on both sides of the paper—as befitted his Yankee thrift. He was denying that he had done anything wrong. There was a great deal at stake at this point, for the second most powerful man in the government stood on trial for accepting gifts from an old and rich friend who had been in trouble with federal regulatory agencies.

Here was the man who had taunted the Democrats in the 1952 campaign about "corruption" and the "mess in Washington." Here was the man who had officiated at the chopping block when other officials of the Republican administration had been accused of going astray in conflict-of-interest cases. Here was the man on whose shoulders rested, for the moment, responsibility for the Eisenhower administration's reputation for morality.

Forced out of the protective White House shell which had shielded him from Congress and the press, Adams had brought with him to the hearing of the House subcommittee on Legislative Oversight a courtesy and desire to please not previously associated with his reputation. Discarded was the flinty exterior that had caused some of those who dealt with him in his White House job to dub him the administration's "abominable 'no' man."

Instead, Adams was saying humbly that he had been "imprudent" in accepting from Bernard Goldfine the accouterments of gracious living. He was denying he had influenced the course of cases pending against his friend before government agencies.

There was an air of unreality about these proceedings. How could the man to whom the President had delegated such sweeping powers and in whom the chief executive reposed such tremendous trust have permitted himself to get involved in such a situation? The answer to that question will be explored later in some detail; let us look first into the delegation of presidential authority to the man who sat within reach of the throttle of government, without popular mandate and with responsibility to no one but the chief executive himself.

As the captain of the White House guard, Adams was a symbol of the staff system by which a popular President had given to a subordinate much of the authority many of his predecessors had guarded zealously for their own exclusive use.

The Adams story began in availability and timing. The crusty little governor of New Hampshire had been one of the first to climb aboard the Eisenhower bandwagon in 1952. He stuck there and when the general later recognized the need of keeping close to him a man with some political acumen, Adams became it.

The snows of winter lay heavily on Concord, New Hampshire, when Adams made the move in 1952 that was to bring the outwardly reluctant general into the presidential-nomination contest. "Old Stone Face," as he was known—and not without affection—in his home state, correctly calculated that the general need not lift a hand to defeat Senator Taft in the New Hampshire primary. After communicating his views to Governor Dewey, Adams filed Eisenhower's name in the race.

There was in those campaign days little of the icy remoteness for which Adams later was to become noted in Washington. The door to his office in the unimposing New Hampshire Statehouse was open to us correspondents. He was happy to answer any specific question, but he never was a man for chitchat. His philosophy on this score was wrapped up in the advice he once gave a reporter: "Never miss an opportunity to keep your mouth shut."

Natives relished telling the story of Adams's encounter with a garrulous woman who inquired of him at a social affair if he had any children.

"Three girls, boy at Dartmouth," Adams replied.

"Oh," said the woman, "tell me about them."

"Just did," Adams responded.

But if he was frugal in conversational words, Adams had the knack of picking weaknesses in the political opposition and of exploiting them. Essentially his campaign against Taft was based on the old familiar grounds that the Ohio senator couldn't win—as indeed he couldn't in the New Hampshire primary. The Eisenhower victory there lifted Adams into the front rank of the candidate's advisers and rewarded him with the designation as floor manager for the general at the Chicago nominating convention.

Dewey and Herbert Brownell, Jr., who had been Dewey's manager in two unsuccessful presidential campaigns, masterminded the Eisenhower convention blitz. Adams and Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., managed the floor strategy effectively. Of this group, Dewey alone wanted no federal post.

While Adams would have liked to become ambassador to Canada, by the time the general election campaign was concluded Eisenhower had decided he wanted this terse, hard-working New Englander as his White House chief of staff. In the campaign period, the general had described Adams as his "personal boss" on political matters and this relationship carried over into the political aspects of many later presidential decisions.

On the day Eisenhower was inaugurated, Adams quietly settled himself in the office next to the new President's and began, as a sort of St. Peter in command of the gate, a career never quite paralleled in American politics.

In his years in the army, Eisenhower had been accustomed to the military staff system and it was natural he would install something like it at the White House.

Under this system, working papers on any problem were prepared in the lower ranks with the understanding that the subordinates there must compose any differences they might have be-

fore passing their recommendations along to the higher ranks. Eventually the recommendations would arrive in the office of the chief of staff.

Across the polished walnut desk, imprinted with the seal of the President of the United States, behind which Adams sat, flowed most of the vital communications of government. It was the job of the keen-minded man who worked there to digest all of these in a marathon day that began at 7:45 A.M. and often ended long past time for any New Englander to have had his supper.

By presidential fiat, the decision was Adams's as to which of these communications, proposals, reports, and official documents he felt it was necessary for Eisenhower to see. Before the President signed any document, he looked first for the initials, "O.K., S.A."

In this function alone Adams wielded power Presidents Roosevelt and Truman had been unwilling to yield to any subordinate. Any chief executive needed a buffer, a trusted man who could weed out the inconsequential, but none of the modern occupants of the presidency ever had gone quite as far as Eisenhower in trusting the judgment of a second in command.

The staff system brought to Adams's desk reports and proposals that had worked their way up through compromises at succeeding levels, with resultant loss of much of the individual initiative that might have marked their beginning. Any minority opposition, even though it might be important, would have been soaked up in the sponge of agreement on the minimum necessities of the problem involved.

If Adams felt the President ought to see any document, he sent it along to the executive desk. If he thought he could handle it alone, Adams was free to make that decision. If he believed no action was required on a particular recommendation before him, it would be pigeonholed.

When we questioned Eisenhower about this system at news conferences, he said he had been in a position since 1941 where he had to use staff help. He added that "certainly if I had not kept well acquainted with the basic facts of my problem, then I would certainly have been ineffective, and at least on a few occasions I

think we did a little bit better than average." Eisenhower added that he didn't think the expression "palace guard" had any real meaning.

"Of course," he said, "you have to have a staff. . . . Now they do sort out the things that are interesting to government and to me and make certain that I get them, whether they are recommendations from important people or ideas or facts or statistics, anything else."

Later the President denied with a show of irritation that any subordinate was making decisions on government policy.

"No staff officer of mine—including . . . Adams—can possibly make a decision without getting my general approval or a decision which is consonant with the general policies laid down by me," he said.

"And he [Adams] is responsible, specifically responsible, that those decisions—and they are nearly always some item of administration in the government—are so stated and promulgated and carried out that the general policy is observed. . . ."

For his own part, Adams once described his position in these words: "It is a job, I think, which makes an effort to shape the decisions the President ultimately will make—all the way from public policy to personnel appointments."

In speeches, Adams was always careful to minimize the authority he exerted. He said in Chicago in 1957, for instance, that "nothing can be further from the truth" than charges he and others "usurp the prerogatives of the President. . . ." But the fact that the presidential assistant felt called upon to deny there was a transfer of power merely served to enhance public doubt on that score.

Adams's contention that his staff saw to it Eisenhower was "one of the best informed men in the country" found a challenge even in the ranks of the Republicans. Senator Styles Bridges of New Hampshire, chairman of the Senate GOP Policy Committee, voiced the view to us reporters one day that the "palace guard" did not always keep the President abreast of government developments. He added that Eisenhower "does not appear to get as much information as he should."

This was at about the time that Democratic National Chairman Paul M. Butler was assailing Eisenhower's defense program. Butler said Eisenhower was "not necessarily qualified to cope with the military problems of the rocket age any more than General Grant would have been qualified to cope with the military problems of World War II."

Even if Eisenhower was so qualified, Butler said the President "has not been putting full time on the job and his staff—particularly Sherman Adams—shields him from day-to-day decisions which are necessary to develop an effective over-all defense program."

While such attacks were discounted because of their political source, there was little doubt that Adams's influence on the course of the Eisenhower administration outweighed that of most of his predecessors among the men who held no elective office but had had a major part in shaping America's history.

One of the most famous of these, Colonel E. M. House, once was described by Woodrow Wilson as "my second personality."

"He is my independent self," Wilson said glowingly. "His thoughts and mine are one. If I were in his place I would do just as he suggested. . . . If anyone thinks he is reflecting my opinion by whatever actions he takes, they are welcome to the conclusion."

With such a strong endorsement, House did a great deal toward molding Wilson's thinking and toward helping direct the course of his actions. But House was a Texas politician who did not even live in Washington. He kept in contact with the President by letter, telephone, and frequent visits to the White House. He lacked Adams's daily association with the President and Adams's position as guardian of the entrance to the throne room.

Wilson used House as a diplomatic agent to convey the Wilsonian policies to other world leaders. But despite the laudatory words he had employed, Wilson coldly dismissed House when the President became convinced his emissary was not, indeed, his "second personality" but was taking it upon himself to make decisions without first consulting the chief executive.

When Franklin Roosevelt went to the White House a gnomelike little man with a racking asthmatic cough and the complexion of a

corpse moved into the office next door. Louis McHenry Howe was the kind of selfless individual, all brain and no physique, who could submerge his own personality in the accomplishment of one objective—the advancement of Roosevelt's political fortunes. When Howe died, soft-spoken Marvin McIntyre, another devoted servant, moved into his place. Roosevelt listened to these men and they influenced him; but he made the decisions.

Harry L. Hopkins, the thin man with the twisted smile, eventually advanced into the inner sanctum of Roosevelt's affection and regard. Perhaps it was his own affliction that made F.D.R. always seem to want at his right hand a man who faced a daily battle to stay physically on his own feet.

In any event, Roosevelt and Hopkins seemed to achieve an intellectual unity that is rare. They thought on the same grand scale. They were stubborn men who enjoyed a fight. But there was no battling between them for Roosevelt always had his way. Hopkins was recorded as saying he never said "no" to the boss; others who did sooner or later found their presence unwanted around the White House.

How much Hopkins always desired to please the boss was illustrated by the story related by Rexford G. Tugwell of Hopkins's return from his first personal mission for F.D.R. to Winston Churchill. Roosevelt wanted to know who wrote Churchill's speeches.

"I hated like hell to tell him that Winston wrote them himself," Tugwell quoted Hopkins as confessing.

While Hopkins had great influence on Roosevelt in a negative way, he never exercised the power that Adams employed to decide what matters would be laid before the President for a decision, nor did he venture to assume the right to make decisions on his own. Hopkins had the President's ear but he was, more often than not, a good listener while the boss was working his ideas out on the dog.

Harry Truman called in the ailing Hopkins to help him out when Roosevelt died. Truman felt that Hopkins, a controversial figure often embroiled in quarrels with Congress, had contributed a great deal to the country.

"He was a man Roosevelt trusted implicitly and leaned upon heavily," Truman said in defense of Hopkins. "He was a dedicated man who never sought credit or the limelight, yet willingly bore the brunt of criticism, just or unjust."

Truman had his own right bowers, but there never was any suggestion that they encroached on presidential powers, even though one of them, John R. Steelman, was assigned command authority that was similar to that assumed by Adams.

As director of the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion, the gray-haired, bespectacled Steelman served Truman as a sort of assistant President. The War Mobilization office had been established by Congress with perhaps the widest delegation of authority ever given to a single civilian official below the President.

Steelman even had the legal right to issue directives to Cabinet members; but after a few months' experience in this field he surprised Truman one day by recommending that the office be abolished.

"You are a peculiar bureaucrat," Truman said. "You have the most powerful position ever delegated by the Congress to anybody and you want me to sign this order abolishing your job?"

"Exactly, Mr. President," Steelman replied. "In peacetime I certainly do not think the President needs anybody with power to act between the President and his Cabinet or the President and anybody else who is supposed to report directly to the President."

Steelman said that when the office was abolished and he became merely an assistant to the President, "I had no authority, no power beyond that of my association and close contact with the President; I could not issue directives to the Cabinet, and I never found that I needed to, in my experience."

Adams had no need for directives, either, but he could block the doorway to the President's office against many, if not all, the Cabinet officers despite Eisenhower's statement that he had issued a "direct order to every member of an executive department or independent agency that he can come to me directly at any time and there is no staff officer can stand in the way."

As a practical matter, Secretary of Commerce Sinclair Weeks said it was the tendency of most Cabinet members to take their

business first to Adams, unless it was of such major importance there was no doubt in their minds that the President "ought to get in on it." Weeks, who remained in the Cabinet nearly five years, said Adams had "rare good judgment on what to take to the President and what to handle himself."

Secretary of the Interior Fred Seaton felt that if any matter obviously required the chief executive's attention, a Cabinet member could get in to see him.

"If it doesn't require his attention," Seaton said, "you're assumed to be intelligent enough to work through his chief of staff."

There was general agreement that while he remained in office, Adams was on top of his job. His knack of going to the heart of the problems brought before him stood him in good stead. His wide knowledge of government helped. But more than anything else he was credited with knowing more about Eisenhower's views on any subject than any other man.

This permitted Adams a latitude of action in areas where the President restricted himself. It was Adams, for instance, who decided to fight Senator McCarthy with some of his own fire when the Wisconsin legislator began flailing away at the army for "coddling communists."

John G. Adams, attorney for the army and no kin to his White House namesake, testified that at a secret meeting of administration officials Sherman Adams proposed that the army draw up a list of incidents in which it charged McCarthy's committee staff members attempted to intimidate the service officials. This became the basis for the army's case in the televised Army-McCarthy hearings that exploded on the country.

Adams also had his hand on the throttle in the controversy over the Dixon-Yates contract for construction of a power plant by a private combine to replace the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) as a source of power for Memphis, Tennessee.

Congressional investigation disclosed that Adolphe Wenzell, a vice-president of the First Boston Corporation, which later became fiscal agent for the Dixon-Yates combine, had also sat on the other side of the conference table as a Budget Bureau adviser

while the contract was being worked out. Democrats assailed this as an example of conflict of interest.

Wenzell was scheduled to testify before the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) on the contract at the time Congress was considering a \$6,500,000 appropriation for the power plant. Adams stepped in with what amounted to an order to the SEC, an agency supposedly independent of the executive department, to delay its hearings until after Congress acted on the money bill.

Hauled before a senatorial subcommittee to explain this delay, SEC Chairman J. Sinclair Armstrong said the hearing was postponed for two days at Adams's request.

Senator Estes Kefauver, Tennessee Democrat, inquired if Armstrong had ever heard of a continuance being granted in such a case before because of a "secret call from outside . . . ?"

"No," the SEC official said.

"Do you think it is a good practice to allow that to be done?" Kefauver asked.

"I would think not," Armstrong replied.

But Armstrong declined to testify about Adams's reasons for bringing about the delay in the hearing. He said he had been ordered by Adams not to divulge any information about communications between the executive department and agency officials concerning the Dixon-Yates contract.

When Kefauver called on Adams to "testify fully" about any conferences he had held concerning the suspension of the SEC hearings, Adams replied that "because of my official and confidential relationship to the President, I respectfully decline the subcommittee's invitation." Kefauver protested in a letter to Adams that government officials "should not and cannot assert privilege where the result would be the suppression of evidence which would show corruption and deception in a matter involving millions of dollars of public funds." But Adams declined to appear and that was that.

In hearings regarding the operations of the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB), there was testimony that after Adams had made inquiries about a then-pending case involving North American

Airlines, the non-scheduled carrier won a five-year reprieve from a CAB order to cease operations.

When Eisenhower was questioned at a news conference on how he felt about Adams's communicating with the CAB in connection with a pending case, the President replied, "Well, again, you are bringing up a thing that I have not heard of." The President went on to say that Adams had a right to gather information about the granting of foreign air-route certificates—something that was not remotely involved in the North American case.

Big Clark R. Mollenhoff of the Des Moines *Register* and *Tribune* wasn't willing to let the answer go at that.

"Mr. President, on that line. . . ." Mollenhoff began.

Bristling, Eisenhower turned to the reporter and snapped, "I don't want anything more about that."

If the heads of the independent regulatory agencies found it advantageous to consult with Adams, Republican politicians found it almost a necessity. Eisenhower had never had much taste for politics and he was perfectly willing for Adams to sit athwart the line of appointment to federal office.

Adams had his own ideas about the type of men the Eisenhower administration ought to have in its important positions. More often than not, his ideas did not coincide with those of GOP National Chairman Leonard W. Hall or his immediate successor, Meade Alcorn. Nor were the Republicans of the House and Senate often asked for suggestions when appointive vacancies occurred. Adams nearly always named the man he wanted and Eisenhower usually accepted his assistant's recommendations without question.

Now patronage helps make the political mare go if it is distributed judiciously. The political workers in the lower ranks always thirst for recognition and for jobs. If they see both going to men who either haven't been active in the party organization or, in some cases, actually belong to the opposing party, their enthusiasm wanes quickly for the backbreaking work of keeping the organization operating in the precincts, counties, and states.

Adams's highhanded handling of patronage could be said to have contributed measurably to three consecutive Republican de-

feats in campaigns for control of Congress during Eisenhower's tenure in office.

Juicy patronage jobs were handed out without the knowledge of senators or representatives in the states concerned. Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona, who epitomized the ultraright-wing sentiment within the Republican party, compiled a list of appointments in his state that went through the Adams mill at the White House. Of the total, more than three fourths of the appointments were made without Goldwater's knowledge—and more than a fourth of them were to Democrats.

Adams had a great deal of difficulty in recognizing that some Republicans retained their loyalty to the ideas that Taft had represented. To Adams, the Taft pitch was dead. To Goldwater and a number of his colleagues, it was a living thing and Adams's efforts to remake the party with presidential appointments were, to say the least, unappreciated.

After he had become national chairman, Alcorn read in the newspapers one day that an individual from his state had been appointed to a federal post. This was the first time the chairman had heard this particular man's name mentioned for the job. Alcorn could think, offhand, of a dozen individuals he would rather have seen nominated. So he protested to Adams, what is this, why do you do it this way?

With icicles on his brows, Adams replied that he was looking for the man who could serve Eisenhower best. What difference did it make, Adams asked, if the party's national chairman had not suggested his name? Alcorn knew the difference, but he was constrained from voicing it by the obvious fact that President Eisenhower was listening to no other voices—including the party's chairman—if Adams recommended a possible appointee.

When Gordon M. Tiffany of New Hampshire, a close friend of Adams, was appointed by the President as staff director of the Civil Rights Commission, Press Secretary Hagerty went out of his way to say at a Thomasville, Georgia, news conference that "Adams did not suggest him for the job." The signals got fouled up in this case; in New Hampshire, Tiffany told reporters that

Adams had called him and had offered him the job, which he had accepted.

When a vacancy occurred on the three-member TVA board, Senators John Sherman Cooper and Thruston B. Morton, Kentucky Republicans, went to the White House to urge Eisenhower to appoint Representative Howard Baker of Tennessee, a Republican representing the TVA area, to the board. Eisenhower told them it had been decided not to appoint a member of Congress to the post and referred his callers to Adams.

The President neglected to say—and perhaps he didn't know—that Adams and Attorney General Rogers had decided at this point that there were too many GOP members of Congress seeking sinecures, appointments to federal posts, which would make it unnecessary for them to run again. The Rogers theory, which Adams bought, was that a man with a well-known name was more likely to win a congressional contest than a Republican starting anew.

In any event, Adams told Cooper and Morton he had under consideration a deputy director of the budget, Arnold R. Jones of Kansas, for appointment to the TVA board. When the two Republican senators left the White House they believed they had an understanding they would be consulted before any final decision was made. As it worked out, Morton was notified minutes before the nomination was sent to the Senate; Cooper learned about the decision from a reporter. This sort of treatment was not calculated to increase the desire of two senators who considered themselves friends of the President to co-operate with an administration that showed no signs of reciprocating. By the time Morton succeeded Alcorn as GOP National Chairman, Adams had departed.

If Adams could be abrupt with staunch supporters, he could be frigid with those who opposed Eisenhower even in small things. It never seemed to occur to him that his political judgment might be challenged successfully by some of the practical operators in Congress who, having continued to win re-election, felt they knew considerably more about what the people were thinking than did Adams, then about eight years removed from the electorate of even such a sparsely populated state as New Hampshire.

It was an accepted fact in Washington that Adams spoke with the voice of Eisenhower and therefore there never was any lack of confidence on the part of the presidential assistant when he presumed to tell members of Congress how he felt they should vote.

Even in the blasé capitol, a telephone call from the White House was an exciting thing, as Adams well knew. A senator's phone would ring and his secretary would announce breathlessly, "The White House is on the line." The senator would pick up the phone expectantly and, without any preliminaries for the man who had been waiting for words from the President, Adams would plunge into the business at hand. He might voice a demand for support of some pending presidential legislation; he might be calling to inquire if the senator would go along with an appointee Adams already had selected; he never, however, called to pass the time of day.

Senator Thomas Kuchel of California, who became the party's Senate whip, told about a telephone call he had had from Adams which he did not relish. Kuchel, a bantam rooster with fighting instincts and a professionally profane vocabulary, had very little good to say about Adams. The President's assistant was well aware of this. Nevertheless, Adams put in a call to Kuchel one day and the senator was summoned to the phone by the familiar, "The White House is calling." When Kuchel picked up the receiver, the conversation went like this:

"Tom," Adams said, "we want your vote for this bill that's pending before the Senate now."

"I'm sorry," Kuchel replied, "but, Governor, I can't go along with you on this. I feel. . . ."

"Thank you, Tom," Adams replied in a heavily sarcastic voice, banging up the phone.

Till the day when Adams walked his lonely way out of government, Kuchel never sought nor was invited to explain his viewpoint. Perhaps this was a small thing to either of these important men but of such small disagreements are big differences of opinion made. The men who agree on small things in the beginning often wind up in agreement on the large things, their varying

perspectives having been accommodated to the idea of looking through a small glass at large events.

There was some evidence early in 1958 that Adams was beginning to consider the possibility of striking out on his own politically in the closing years of Eisenhower's tenure. The iceberg of any such personal ambition, which had been submerged in the service of the President, surfaced briefly in January of that year. It proved to be as controversial as the frozen monolith that still floated beneath the administration waters.

In a Minneapolis, Minnesota, speech, Adams showed he had the same natural instinct for the jugular vein Vice-President Nixon had displayed. Adams unveiled an ability to hit the Democrats at a vital, if not necessarily relevant, spot.

On the same night that Eisenhower was saying in Chicago that the foremost American objective of military security and peace "is not a political or partisan matter," Adams took what the Democrats described as the low road in challenging them to battle on this objective.

"In such a contest, we have abundant ammunition," Adams told a Republican rally.

"We do not need to bring up the military catastrophe of Pearl Harbor nor the scientific catastrophe of losing our atomic secrets.

"Nor do we need to dwell on the policies that led to the Red invasion of Korea, nor the plight of our defenses when the invasion began, nor the handcuffs put on our conduct of that war. We need not even refer to the tragic loss of China, nor the surrender of positions of freedom throughout the world.

"We can also ignore at the moment the wasteful and crippling defensive planning between World War II and the following war they couldn't end."

This strong medicine, contrived to put the Democrats on the defense on the issue of which party was best equipped to keep the peace, was hailed in some Republican quarters as the kind of rallying cry the party needed. There was even a brief interval where Adams was referred to as "good old Sherm" by some of those who had been loudest in their complaints against him.

Eisenhower shrugged off the difference between his and

Adams's approach with the news-conference observation that his chief assistant had a "rebuttal to make in the case of some individuals that he thought were not observing this bipartisanship spirit" in discussing international policies.

The President said Adams had exactly the same right he himself had to say what he pleased.

"He knows exactly what I believe, what are my convictions, my policy, and he attempts to make his speeches exactly in that line and I do not, very naturally, take every word of his speeches and go over them in detail," the President said.

Eisenhower went on to comment revealingly that in an organization as big as the government had grown, he couldn't concern himself with every detail of its operations, nor could he always make certain that things were done the way he wanted them done.

"Now in war, or any place else, I saw time and again where there were things not done exactly as I would have them done, but I still approved them because you have to do it," he said.

Quite a number of things were not done as Eisenhower might have done them if he had had more time for "details." On the other hand, a number of things undoubtedly were done by his assistants because Eisenhower himself seemed to have no sensitivity toward the acceptance of gifts and presents of all kinds. What was right for the boss could not be accounted as wrong for the underling, unless different standards applied to the President than to his assistants.

Sherman Adams, the smart, capable "voice of conscience" for the administration, found to his sorrow, however, that different standards did apply.

## 20 Red-Carpet Virus



The green and white station wagon rolled to a stop and a slight, granite-faced man, wearing a double-breasted blue suit of uncertain vintage, got out and walked briskly into Washington's Broadcast House.

Bearing a quadruple-spaced manuscript with him, Sherman Adams marched into Studio 11 to face the bleak political realities that were forcing him out of office as the second most powerful man in government.

The assistant to the President sat down at a brown desk, framed by the lights above and partitioned off from the expanse of wires and equipment by a backdrop of imitation paneling. From a side table nearby Press Secretary Hagerty had snatched only a moment before a book entitled *The Happiest Man in the World*. Arranging his manuscript carefully between the slanting microphones before him, Adams began on cue to read a defense of his honor to the millions who watched on television.

"I have done no wrong," he said. Lifting his eyes to look squarely into the camera, he added that a "calculated and contrived effort" had been made to discredit him and he was resigning to prevent further embarrassment to the Republican administration.

"A campaign of vilification by those who seek personal advantage by my removal from public life has continued up to this moment," he said. "These efforts, it is now clear, have been intended to destroy me and in so doing to embarrass the Administration and the President of the United States."

Actually, of course, Adams himself had made the decision to resign after he had asked Chairman Meade Alcorn to poll the Republican National Committee and a majority of its members had supported the belief that he ought to bow out. Perhaps the Democrats had been responsible for airing his acceptance of gifts

and favors from Bernard Goldfine, but the Republicans had supplied the pressure which moved him out of office.

Eisenhower deplored the circumstances that brought about the resignation. He praised Adams's "selfless and tireless devotion to the work of the White House and to me personally. . . ." But the President, too, was bowing to the law of the political jungle. In the opinion of nearly all of the Republican candidates then campaigning, the actions of the President's subordinate had endangered their own re-election. Adams must go, they said, and the President accepted the verdict sadly.

Postmaster General Arthur Summerfield summed up the feelings of most administration leaders when he said it was a "tragedy" that because of "a few minor errors a man who is without a shred of dishonesty is lost to the public service."

In these words, the acceptance of expensive gifts and favors from a businessman who was involved in cases before government regulatory agencies became only "minor errors" in an administration of a President who had himself no hesitancy in receiving gifts ranging from trinkets to tractors.

People like to give presents to Presidents. Sometimes these gifts satisfy the vanity of an individual who can brag about his association with the chief executive. Other gifts represent little more than bids for publicity for the product involved or for the organization donating it. The beaver trappers of Maine, for instance, pleaded with Mrs. Eisenhower to accept enough pelts for a coat, complaining that their industry was going to the minks. Even though she paid \$385 to have the pelts made into a coat she didn't want, the President's wife was criticized for accepting the gift.

There was no such criticism, however, when friends built a house, "Mamie's cabin," on the Augusta national golf course and made it available to the President and his wife for life. This gift was no more practical than many hundreds of others the President received, along with objects of art, ceremonial swords, and other costly paraphernalia from the heads of foreign states.

Democrats made much of a \$4000 tractor, complete with cigarette lighter, which he accepted for his Gettysburg farm. It was a present from the Farm State Co-ops of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and

Indiana. Along with the tractor, Eisenhower got twenty-five head of valuable livestock, some worth \$1500 each, as well as two quarter horses contributed by the American Quarter Horse Association. Dan Gainey, a Minnesota Republican who had once been in Harold Stassen's camp, contributed a black Arabian filly. J. R. Lackey of Asheville, North Carolina, donated a five-year-old pony for the Eisenhower children.

The golf pros coughed up \$3000 for a putting green at the farm and it was one of the President's proudest possessions. When reporters and photographers gathered around the edge of it one day during an informal look at the farm, Eisenhower snapped at a newsman who got too near the velvety surface, "Don't walk on my green!" We looked at, but weren't invited to ride in, a gift electric golf cart.

Various nurseries put up a greenhouse, a sixty-foot wall, and contributed 2000 bulbs to spruce up the farm. The American Legion Boys Nation donated a 2½-horsepower cultivator. Eisenhower also got a pig named Pansy, a fifteen-foot plywood skiff, a brace of pearl-handled revolvers, and \$300 worth of fishing equipment.

To go in the house there was a \$3000 Grandma Moses painting presented by the Cabinet, a 2000-year-old oil lamp donated by the United Jewish Appeal, the desk on which Eisenhower wrote the prayer delivered at his first inaugural, and a \$3000 sterling-silver cutlery set from Sheffield, England.

Also from abroad came a rare portrait of George Washington given by General Francisco Franco of Spain, ten tons of teakwood from Premier U Nu of Burma, a gem-encrusted map of Ceylon from Premier Bandaranaike, a suit of armor from Japan, a ceremonial mask from Thailand, and the antique conference table, twelve chairs, and an Indian carpet from Stanwell House, where General Eisenhower had planned the D-Day invasion of Europe.

No one really believed, of course, that these gifts influenced Eisenhower's judgment on any matter of state. But they did nothing to discourage the small fry from accepting some of the things that came their way—often to their sorrow.

There was, for instance, the case of Victor Purse, a minor State Department official, who was assigned to assist King Saud of Saudi Arabia when the latter paid an official state visit to Washington. Saud, who distributed lavish tips and gifts at the drop of a hat, presented Eisenhower with a ceremonial sword.

However, when Saud gave Purse's wife an automobile because of what the king said was the "outstanding contribution" the State Department official had made toward understanding between Americans and Arabs, a great cry was raised. Eisenhower told us in this case that the State Department would have to "wrestle with" the question as to whether Mrs. Purse should keep the car. Purse bowed out of his job but Mrs. Purse kept the car.

Saud, who had come to the United States seeking a loan, tried to be freehanded with everyone. When the monarch had left, Secretary of State Dulles turned over to his department for impounding a suitcase, an Arabian robe, and a gold wrist watch given him by Saud. Also impounded was \$6700 in tips the king had handed to department security men who had guarded him during his visit.

All these, with thousands of other gifts to those in the lower ranks of government, were held under a law in which Congress said only it could approve the receipt of gratuities by American officials from foreign donors.

The President's acceptance of so many and varied gifts from domestic sources was called "politically immoral" by Senator Wayne Morse of Oregon, a frequent critic. Morse contended the chief executive was violating the spirit of the conflict-of-interest laws, adding that, "He is not going to acquit himself by saying he was within the letter of the law."

In the light of Morse's comments, Andrew F. Tully of the Scripps-Howard newspapers asked Eisenhower at a news conference to outline his philosophy governing gifts.

Eisenhower replied that, with two minor exceptions, most of the gifts had come to him from organizations. He added:

"Anything that is given me is right out on the record, and it is given for a particular purpose. People have put . . . shrubbery, trees, things like that on the farm on the theory that they want to

build up that as a good looking place some day to be a sort of a public property.

"Now, as far as I am concerned, I need no gifts and I never accept gifts that I believe have any personal motive whatever behind them, I mean any selfish motive of any kind. . . . I merely try to keep my relations with people on what I think are a friendly, decent basis."

We could all agree that Eisenhower didn't need any gifts. Unlike some of his predecessors, the President was well-heeled financially. In the 1952 campaign, Eisenhower's statement of his income and his worth showed he had netted \$476,250 from the sale in 1948 of his book, *Crusade in Europe*. He had been able to keep a large share of the profits because the Internal Revenue Bureau—given the nod by President Truman—had ruled that the lower capital-gains tax, rather than the regular income tax, applied in this case. When Truman himself got around to writing a book, Congress had changed the law and he got no such tax break.

Eisenhower, who began married life in 1916 on army pay of \$161.67 a month, was described as a millionaire by reporter Fletcher Knebel of the Minneapolis *Star* and *Tribune* in a series of articles. Newsmen wondered out loud how the President, with stockholdings and other investments, could be certain that he was clear of interest conflicts.

"Well, first of all," Eisenhower told us, "if that man who knows so much about my business will offer me a million dollars to sell out, he is going to make a sale in a hurry." There was never any response from the White House, however, when a group of North Carolinians, headed by Kidd Brewer of Raleigh, offered to buy the President out for a million.

Eisenhower went on to say that while he was an elected official and not subject to the conflict-of-interest laws, he had taken "everything I owned except for a little cash in the banks and put it in an irrevocable trust so that during the period that I am President, I do not even know what I own, so that no judgment of mine can ever be influenced by any fancied advantage I could get out of my relatively modest holdings in anything."

Eisenhower added that he got reports only once a year from his private investments, including the taxes he owed. Although a New York City trust company handled his investments, the President had an arrangement with jovial, rotund George Allen by which Allen boarded Eisenhower's livestock in exchange for farming the crop lands of the chief executive's \$250,000 Gettysburg estate.

Eisenhower and Allen were constant golf and bridge companions and we reporters often wondered if they ever mentioned the name of another old friend of both, Truman.

It was at about the time he was ending his friendship with Truman that Eisenhower set the pace for the attacks on what the Republicans called the "scandals" of the Democratic administration when he declared in a Des Moines speech on September 18, 1952:

"We are going to cast out the crooks and their cronies. . . . And I can promise you that we won't wait for Congressional prodding and investigations. The prodding this time will come from the top. And when we are through, the experts in shady and shoddy government operations will be on their way back to the shadow haunts, the subcellars of American politics from whence they came."

In practical operation, however, the Eisenhower administration was little different from its predecessor. Congress, as usual, initiated all of the investigations of conflict-of-interest cases. Instead of prodding, there was presidential discounting of the importance of congressional disclosures and resistance to pressure for the firing of the officials involved.

As Calvin Coolidge once said, "People are like apples, they can spoil." But, by the very nature of things, no President could be convinced easily that a man he had appointed had not measured up to the standards the chief executive had set for himself and those about him.

Eisenhower had been in office less than three months when one of the top men in his successful campaign, C. Wesley Roberts, resigned as Republican National Chairman in the wake of disclo-

sures of alleged lobbying activities in the legislature of his home state of Kansas.

In July 1955, Adams, then the keeper of the administration's clean hound's tooth, had to tell Harold E. Talbott that his services no longer were needed as Secretary of the Air Force because of congressional disclosures that he had solicited government business for a private firm with which he was connected.

In November, Peter A. Strobel resigned as Public Buildings Commissioner under charges that he had attempted to use his office to help his private engineering firm's clients get business. Hugh W. Cross quit as an Interstate Commerce Commissioner in the same month after a Senate investigation of his intervention in a Chicago transportation contract.

This was the month also that Eisenhower was forced to cancel the Dixon-Yates contract because of the dual-role activities of Adolphe Wenzell in serving both the government and a banking firm.

The list grew in 1956 with the resignation of Edmund F. Mansure as General Services Administrator in connection with charges of favoritism in the award of nickel-mill contracts. Robert B. McLeaish resigned as Farmers Home Administrator after charges of personal misconduct were made against him.

In 1957 Robert Tripp Ross quit as Assistant Secretary of Defense after disclosure of an army-contract award to his wife's firm.

In the spring of 1958 the House subcommittee on Legislative Oversight, which later was to turn up the Adams case, heard testimony that Richard Mack, a Federal Communications Commissioner, had received thousands of dollars in loans from an individual who was acting for a corporation awarded a television channel in Miami, Florida, with Mack's vote. Adams had the unpleasant duty of telling Mack to pack his bag.

About this time Eisenhower was saying that "the standard of official conduct must be the highest standard known to human behavior."

"Of course," the President told the Republican Women's National Conference, "in a government as large as ours, staffed by

fallible beings, there is no way to make certain that a deviation from this standard will not sometimes occur."

These deviations from standards were nothing new in the government. Benjamin Franklin observed wisely that "there is no kind of dishonesty into which otherwise good people more easily and frequently fall than that of defrauding the government." Even where there was no fraud, there had existed from the beginning of the republic the problem, not solved even today, of drawing a line between a gift and a bribe.

George Washington didn't want to accept any gifts in the presidency but there was little he could do about it when the King of Spain sent him a pair of jackasses from Malta with the king's compliments. Washington also accepted a gift of a piece of woven silk from an admirer to whom he wrote: "Contrary as it is to an established maxim of mine not to accept a present from anyone, yet, considering this as a mark of your peculiar attention to me and as evidence of what our climate, aided by industry, is capable of yielding, I receive and thank you for this effort of your skill."

If Washington was a model of rectitude, not all of the men around him were. Alexander Hamilton was the author of a "leak" that, as Secretary of the Treasury, he was going to redeem at par seventy million dollars' worth of war bonds then selling for about five cents on the dollar. In the rush to buy these bonds up at bargain prices were sixteen of the twenty-six United States senators and twenty-nine of sixty-four representatives. If Hamilton did not benefit financially, he could assume that he nevertheless had bought the support of a majority of the Senate and a substantial minority of the House.

Hamilton's great rival, Thomas Jefferson, laid down the rule as President that he would take no gifts of monetary value. He did accept a 1600-pound Cheshire cheese, but on the other hand he turned down an elegant set of china which the wife of a Baltimore book dealer wished to present to him.

"It is a law, sacred to me while a public character, to receive nothing that bears a pecuniary value," he said. "This is necessary to the confidence in my country, it is necessary as an example for its benefit, and necessary to the tranquility of my own mind."

But Jefferson's standards of morality were not shared by some of the other outstanding men in the early years of the republic. Vice-President John C. Calhoun, Henry Clay, and Daniel Webster saw nothing improper about obtaining unsecured loans from the government-chartered Bank of the United States. At one time Webster's unsecured loans amounted to \$26,000 when he and his colleagues were trying to perpetuate the "bribery bank" with a new charter.

Andrew Jackson, who instituted the "spoils system" of doling out federal jobs to the party faithful, had few reservations about accepting gifts. He got a collection of ornate swords, a satin coat, a razor strop, a carpet, a saddle of mutton, and a phaeton built from the timbers of the frigate *Constitution*.

One gift Jackson didn't much care for came in the form of a lion, sent to him by the Sultan of Morocco. Since the White House was unequipped with lion cages, Jackson hastily arranged to give the animal to an orphans' home which, in turn, sold it to a circus for \$3350.

When Commodore Jesse Duncan Elliott brought home in a warship from Palestine a marble sarcophagus he had been told was intended for a Roman emperor, he tried to give the stone coffin to the aged statesman. Jackson replied stiffly that it would not be consistent with his lifelong democratic principles to be buried like a potentate.

Down through the years Presidents continued to be offered gifts that they didn't want and had no use for. When Millard Fillmore, a practical man, was given a carriage he didn't need, he sold it and used the proceeds to buy a silver set he really wanted.

While Americans prided themselves on being democratic, the plain fact was that they were only complying with the ancient custom of giving gifts to the king. If the king smiled on them or their product, that in itself was sufficient reward. Presidential acceptance of these gifts, however, tended to encourage those in the ranks to take without much thought the gratuities that came their way. There were always present, of course, the greedy who needed no example to spur them on in dipping into the public till.

Even honest Abe Lincoln, who never accepted anything of out-

standing value, had his difficulties with subordinates who felt that the government owed them something more than their salaries for the services they were giving their country.

Lincoln had trouble with his first Secretary of War, Simon Cameron, a Pennsylvania politician who believed that the spoils belonged to those who arrived at them first. Cameron's moral outlook was exemplified in the lasting phrase he contributed to the lexicon of politics when he said, "An honest politician is one who, when he is bought, will stay bought."

It was only a question of time until Cameron had arrived at the highest bid for his under-the-table dealings with war contractors. The news got around, as it always does, and Thaddeus Stevens took the rumors to Lincoln one day. When Stevens had reported at some length about Cameron's activities, Lincoln broke in to exclaim, "You don't mean he'd steal?"

"He wouldn't steal a red-hot stove," Stevens replied dryly.

Cameron, informed of this conversation, demanded an immediate retraction. Stevens complied.

"I said you wouldn't steal a red-hot stove," Stevens told Cameron. "I now take that back."

Softhearted in this case, as most Presidents are with their erring subordinates, Lincoln packed Cameron off to Russia as a U.S. minister.

Andrew Johnson tried valiantly to maintain Lincoln's standard of morals but didn't always succeed. Johnson was offered a carriage as a gift but declined and the House of Representatives was so impressed that it passed a resolution praising him—about the last good word the House ever had to say for Johnson. The President, however, had no moral scruples about accepting a free insurance policy from the Phoenix Mutual Life Insurance Company.

All of the Presidents before him rated as pikers in accepting gifts when General Ulysses S. Grant moved into the center of the stage. Having been always a poor man, Grant was dazzled by the wealth of those who wished it known, for their own purposes, that they associated intimately with the President.

A citizenry grateful for his services in the war contributed a \$16,000 house in Galena, Illinois, a \$60,000 mansion in Philadel-

phia, \$100,000 in cash from New York City, and a \$5000 library from Boston. But such individual gifts as that of a \$6000 span of trotting horses set the tone for scandalous doings in his administration. Big Boy was, indeed, allowing himself to be enriched without batting an eye, and the greedy hands of his followers reached for the trough with confidence that they could get by with almost anything.

Grant cared not one whit that the fine trotting horses, which he displayed with pride, had been the gift of John McDonald, superintendent of internal revenue at St. Louis, who subsequently was implicated in the Whisky Ring conspiracy that cost the government millions of dollars.

Grant was disturbed when it was disclosed that his Secretary of War, William W. Belknap, had sold the trade monopoly at an army fort for \$6000 a year. But the President left action to Congress. Belknap became the first Cabinet officer to be impeached. He beat the rap by resigning hastily and subsequently gained acquittal in the Senate by a five-vote margin.

Belknap was a peanut operator, however, compared with Grant's Secretary of the Navy, George M. Robeson, who had come into the Cabinet as a penniless lawyer. Robeson went into partnership in a firm that sold supplies to the navy and within eight years the Secretary managed to put \$320,000 in the bank.

Grant, meanwhile, was having his misadventures with the wealthy pirates who wined and dined the fatuous President. When Jay Gould and Jim Fisk, Jr., Wall Street plungers, enlisted Grant's brother-in-law, Abel Rathbone Corbin, a stock speculator, in an effort to corner the gold market, they believed they had the President safely in their corner. Gould and Fisk thought they had the promise of the President not to let the Treasury sell gold for a short period. But when the price of gold went up twenty-five points under their speculative buying, Grant exercised the integrity that remained in him and ordered the Treasury to sell. The price came tumbling down over the speculators' ears.

This was an incredible era in American politics when a besmirched politician like James G. Blaine could still be called "the plumed knight of Maine." Blaine, as Speaker of the House, and

Vice-President Schuyler Colfax were involved in the Crédit Mobilier scandals in which bribed Congress members had given away nearly 200,000 square miles of public lands to the railroads in brazen exchange for personal financial gain.

Accused of accepting stock and favors from railroad tycoons, Blaine replied defiantly: "Why should I not be friendly with the well-to-do? I like rich people."

This era of the largess gradually faded out and the morality of presidential administrations righted itself. Presidents continued to receive presents, but they were largely ceremonial rather than peculiarly lucrative. Because he was advertising an infant industry, there was no complaint when William Howard Taft accepted an Alco automobile, early version of the Locomobile. It was not, in fact, until the Harding administration came along—and passed into history—that the public became aroused to the belief that some of the gifts that came to high administration officials could be classified with the ugly word, bribes.

Harding's puffy-jawed, pasty-faced Attorney General, Harry Daugherty, was the king pin of the Ohio gang which operated from the Little Green House on K Street, where the President went occasionally to play a friendly game of poker with men who were using him but of whose machinations he knew nothing at all.

Here the deals were made for the sale of illegal permits to bootleggers to withdraw liquor from government-sealed distilleries. Just how much easy money flowed out in this manner history will never know. But Roy A. Haynes, Federal Prohibition Commissioner, testified that the head of a state division of his organization, whose pay was \$6000 yearly, could easily rake in a million dollars a month in bribes. He said one agent had been offered a regular \$300,000 weekly in bribes.

Daugherty, who was accounted broke when he was appointed to his \$12,000 a year job, put away \$100,000 in two years. In the big stakes Teapot Dome deal, Secretary of the Interior Albert B. Fall got \$328,000 in securities and tucked \$100,000 in cash in his little black bag.

Bewildered and stunned by the disclosures of what his trusted

friends had done, Harding voiced an age-old complaint: "What should a President do whose friends have betrayed him?"

The licenses to plunder expired, of course, when pinched-mouthed Calvin Coolidge moved into the President's chair. There began to flow into Coolidge, however, a stream of gidgets and gadgets of little intrinsic but of great humorous value. The nation guffawed, along with Grace Coolidge, when the President donned an Indian eagle headdress, almost as large as he, and peered out unsmilingly from beneath the rim of it. A lucky photographer succeeded in getting Mrs. Coolidge in the background, nearly doubled up in stitches of laughter.

There was even a light moment in the grim final hours of the Hoover occupancy of the White House. Somebody sent the President a banjo and for those who could imagine Hoover strumming "Happy Days Are Here Again" on this instrument, even the depression seemed momentarily not quite an all-engulfing disaster.

Like Hoover, Franklin Roosevelt was accepted as a rich man and it made little difference that a flood tide of gifts rolled in on this urbane President. Instinctively, the average voter knew that the way to gain Roosevelt's favor was to come up with an idea, not a gift. The ideas were welcome, and often cherished, be they good, bad, or indifferent. The gifts were something that went with the job and not to be given more than passing attention.

Unfortunately, there was not the same protective armor of financial security about Truman. But Truman was a practical and moral man, a good Baptist who was a little disdainful of all the folderol that surrounded his high office. He took the fat turkeys, the smoked hams, the ceremonial masks, and the gold-encrusted swords in his stride. And he was not swayed in his judgments by these.

Nevertheless, Truman could not escape the political responsibility for his seeming don't-care attitude toward the mink-coat and food-freezer incidents. In the uproar over these, Vaughan offered to resign as military aide to save the President embarrassment. Truman replied crisply, "No, we came to the White House together and we're going to leave together."

Years later Truman said, "There wasn't anything crooked about

General Vaughan. He was viciously abused. They were trying to get at the man in the White House. Vaughan was my military aide and that's all. He had nothing to do with running the government."

We peppered Truman in this era with questions as to whether he was going to fire Vaughan. He always said "no" and this was in line with what the President told a banquet of reserve officers in 1949 after columnist Drew Pearson had criticized Vaughan on the radio.

"Now, I am just as fond and just as loyal to my military aide as I am to the high brass," Truman told the banqueters, "and I want you to distinctly understand that any S.O.B. who thinks he can cause any of these people to be discharged by me, by some smart alec over the air or in the paper, he has another think coming."

There was no escaping the fact, however, that Vaughan's acceptance of the freezer was used by Truman's enemies to belabor the administration after the President's aide had laid himself open to attack by a thoughtless action of the kind that was to lead Adams into trouble years later.

Aside from other obvious parallels, it was evident that Vaughan and Adams both were victims of red-carpet virus. This is the miasma that attacks men when they work close to the sources of great power, move in exciting circles, and become celebrities accustomed to all of the extra-fare attentions that are paid to the great.

Both Adams and Vaughan were men of modest means who never really had a chance to fly high until they wound up in proximity to the presidency. Adams had had but a tantalizing taste of how the upper half lives when he was governor of New Hampshire. Vaughan found life more enjoyable in Washington, while he was serving Senator Truman as a secretary, than it ever had been in Missouri. Neither ever had it so good as when they were in the White House.

The American people, of course, want the President to live and travel in style. The fringe benefits of the presidency are many. Eisenhower had at his command a fleet of five airplanes, one of

which cost two million dollars, two helicopters costing \$200,000 each, three air-conditioned limousines, a navy cabin cruiser, and, until it was retired for non-use, a private railroad car. In addition to the White House, there was available to him a mountain retreat near Thurmont, Maryland.

For practical purposes the President could go anywhere he wanted any time he wanted. If he chose to fly to Augusta for golf, the flight could not be duplicated by commercial charter plane of the same class for less than \$1500.

Those who traveled with the President went first-class. They stayed in the best hotel rooms; they ate the expensive meals, and they commanded top service. All the little niceties were available for their comfort and soon they became used to the plush treatment that only the very rich could afford.

But their government salaries were not large and, being basically honest men, they had not feathered their financial nests. Yet they felt they had social standards to maintain as close associates of the President. The costly red-carpet treatment was thrust at them at every turn.

What was more natural than that they should accept gifts from their friends that would make their homes more luxurious? Why should not the chief assistant to the President, while traveling as a private citizen, permit a friend to pick up the tab for hotel suites?

While this logic might satisfy the individual who was confident of his own integrity and felt it was unassailable, it was not acceptable to the politicians whose political lives were at stake in the elections. When Maine went Democratic by a landslide and Republican Senator Frederick G. Payne, who also had accepted gifts from Goldfine, went down to defeat, Adams gave in to the panicky demands for his resignation.

So the man in whose hands the President had placed unprecedented power and trust closed his White House desk for the last time. His passage from the scene was to have some unexpected results within a few months when the President's other tower of strength, Secretary of State Dulles, was stricken with illness.

## 21 The Nearly Indispensable Man



The President of the United States strode briskly out of the hospital bedroom, a broad smile on his face. A pace behind him, Major General Leonard D. Heaton, commandant of Walter Reed Army Hospital, matched the chief executive's stride. There was a worried smile on Heaton's countenance as President Eisenhower turned to him in parting and said:

"Take good care of the boy—I need him."

On that November day in 1956, Eisenhower had put the finger on the vital relationship he had maintained with Secretary of State John Foster Dulles since the latter had been sworn in as a Cabinet member more than three years before. It was the same phrase that Eisenhower was to apply eighteen months later to Sherman Adams—under quite different circumstances—"I need him."

At sixty-eight, when most men might have been enjoying a well-earned retirement, Dulles was flat on his back in a hospital bed after an operation for removal of a cancerous part of his large intestine. But despite General Heaton's obvious reservations, the amazing Cabinet member was to arise from his bed, shake off his illness as if it were no more than a bad cold, and carry on at top speed for twenty-five months until he was stricken with a colon inflammation.

In February 1959, the tableau of a presidential visit to a Secretary of State in the hospital was repeated. This time there was a difference. The dependable Adams was gone and Dulles had been put out of action by a recurrence of cancer. The President stood, more alone than he had ever been, on the threshold of the Berlin crisis.

On this visit Eisenhower had brought with him British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan and Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd to talk with the gaunt and ailing man who had been the principal architect of American foreign policy for six years.

Wearing a maroon bathrobe and black slippers, the seventy-one-year-old Dulles shuffled slowly from a sun room to greet his visitors and sit with them in the presidential suite of the army hospital. In perhaps unconscious recognition of Dulles's pre-eminence in the field in which he himself now was being forced to take command, Eisenhower insisted that the Secretary take the center of the couch when photographers got ready to snap pictures. Dulles refused and compromised by sitting in a side chair, with Eisenhower and Macmillan on the couch and Lloyd in another side chair.

For fifty-seven minutes the four leaders of the Anglo-American world discussed the Russian threat to Berlin. Eisenhower, Macmillan, and Lloyd were bound for Camp David, on Catoctin Mountain in Maryland—where Eisenhower was to meet months later with Khrushchev—in search of an agreement on a common front to present to the Russians.

As Eisenhower and Macmillan walked out of the hospital arm in arm, reporters asked the President whether he got any ideas about the Berlin problem from Dulles.

"He always makes me think," Eisenhower replied significantly.

It was the belief of most of those who watched the Republican administration's operations that Dulles had done most of the primary thinking about international problems. The barrel-chested, blinking, lip-pursing Secretary of State was a familiar sight in the airports and the chancelleries of the world. His penchant for personal diplomacy kept him in the air so often that it became a good-natured joke around Washington that the scientists would really have accomplished the ultimate when they designed a plane that flew without Dulles. Before his illness, which ended in his death on May 24, 1959, Dulles had logged 559,998 miles of travel, visiting forty-six nations as Secretary of State.

Dulles was the throbbing center of American foreign policy because Eisenhower reposed in him a confidence no other President in modern times had given a Cabinet member. Not Truman nor Franklin Roosevelt nor Wilson nor Theodore Roosevelt had been willing to entrust to another the most sacrosanct of his powers—the formation of foreign policy. The hard decisions were made by

Dulles. They became official policy when Eisenhower stamped them with his approval.

That is not to say that Dulles ever was arrogant, ostentatious, or careless about the vast authority handed to him by the President. On the contrary, he was exceedingly discreet in keeping Eisenhower informed of daily developments and in seeking the boss's approval for every move he made. But it was hardly disputable that the policies originated in that handsomely large head, still adequately crowned with white hair in a seventh decade of existence, where the well-trained brain of the Secretary of State worked overtime.

For Dulles, the head man of a Cabinet that once had been tabbed as composed of "nine millionaires and a plumber," the road was not easy and there were many sharp turns and pitfalls. In the beginning it was his task to reorient the Republican party from its traditional isolationism toward internationalism. Since he was suspect by both sides in this fundamental cleavage, he was seldom applauded by either. He had no political home, as it were.

The Democrats, on the other hand, spent years in deplored his "rigidity" of policies and his seeming inability at times to adjust to the changing conditions of a world that was awry. Favorite Democratic adjectives for his policies were "erratic, naive, sterile, and timid." The cacophony of the opposition's criticism swelled loudest in election years, as in 1956, when Adlai Stevenson declared: "I say that it is time for a Secretary of State who can tell the difference between victories and defeats—for a Secretary of State more concerned with America's prestige than his own."

Dulles, of course, had invited these attacks by his own partisan activities before he became Secretary of State. A secretary at the Second Hague Peace Conference in 1907 at the age of nineteen, Dulles had trained for diplomacy all of his life. In 1917 Woodrow Wilson sent him to negotiate with Central American countries for protection of the Panama Canal. In 1918-19 he served as counsel for the U. S. Commission at the World War I peace conference at Versailles, France.

Dulles turned to the political side in 1944 as foreign-affairs adviser to Dewey in the latter's unsuccessful race for Presi-

dent. In a subsequent effort to emphasize bipartisanship, Roosevelt named him as adviser to the U.S. delegation at the United Nations organization conference in San Francisco in 1945.

This bipartisanship held over under Truman, and Dulles served as a Republican adviser to three Democratic Secretaries of State in foreign-minister conferences in London, Moscow, and Paris. In 1950, he was appointed to the Senate, ran for election as a Republican, and lost.

Truman long had been committed to bipartisanship on foreign affairs. In fact, House Speaker Sam Rayburn liked to tell of the first meeting congressional leaders had with Truman after he became President. The new chief executive outlined some foreign-policy proposals and called for questions. A congressional leader inquired about the domestic political reaction to these proposals. Turning on him, Truman said sternly:

"Let's get one thing straight. I never want to hear that damn word 'politics' mentioned here again when we are discussing a thing like this."

Because Dulles had raised the President's political hackles with his statements during the senatorial campaign, Truman had to overcome a great deal of reluctance to name the defeated candidate as consultant to the Secretary of State. In that role, Dulles was responsible for the successful negotiation of the peace treaty with Japan.

But Dulles threw bipartisanship overboard again in 1952 when he consulted with Eisenhower and Senator Taft in the drafting of a GOP foreign-policy plank that, among other things, contended the Democratic administration had "plunged us into war in Korea without the consent of our citizens" and "committed this nation to fight back under the most unfavorable circumstances."

Dulles sold the plank to Eisenhower with a minimum of debate and even Taft was happy with it because it promised that secret agreements would be denounced, held out the possibility of liberation for the iron-curtain countries, and pledged the rolling back of communism.

Dulles was responsible for Eisenhower's announcement, in the President's first State of the Union message, that he was unleash-

ing Chiang Kai-shek for possible future military action against the mainland of Red China, a position that had to be abandoned when the crisis over Quemoy and Matsu developed in 1955.

As a matter of fact, most of the domestic political criticism and much of the antipathy to Dulles among other allied statesmen stemmed from his activities as a sloganneer. He set the Democrats on edge by denouncing as "inadequate and immoral" the "policy of containment" of communism in effect under the Truman administration. He had hoped to seize the initiative but his own "policy of liberation" never got off the ground and in the end he was forced to build a series of alliances—spreading American military requirements more widely around the world than they ever had been before.

To fit the pattern of these alliances, Dulles seized upon the phrase "massive retaliation." He spoke of "rolling back the iron curtain" and promised that the Eisenhower administration would "seize that precious intangible, the initiative." A magazine article which told of Dulles's "brinkmanship," his theory that a nation sometimes must go to the brink of war to save peace, gave the Democrats ammunition to contend that he was recklessly risking hostilities.

When France balked at the rearming of Germany within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Dulles topped two months of quarreling among allied diplomats with the thundering threat of "agonizing reappraisal" of U.S. policy toward France.

What part the utterances of the American Secretary of State played in the bloody Hungarian revolt will be difficult for history to establish. He had offered the iron-curtain countries hope of "liberation from the yoke of Moscow." Although he said it might not come about for a long time, he contended that "courage in the neighboring lands will not be sustained unless the United States makes it publicly known that it wants and expects liberation to occur."

"The mere statement of that wish and expectation would change, in an electrifying way, the mood of the captive peoples," he added.

Citing this, the *Democratic Digest*, organ of the Democratic party, expressed the opposition's critical view in these words:

"How much it changed the mood of the Hungarians would be hard to determine, but certainly they learned the hard way that what Dulles had to say was only a 'mere statement' as Russian tanks slaughtered their freedom fighters."

Representative James Roosevelt, California Democrat and son of F.D.R., told the House that "unfortunately in the case of Hungary I think history will show we misled those who took part in the rebellion, and it cost many lives."

However, Representative James G. Fulton, Pennsylvania Republican, disputed this view. He said a House investigation had shown no evidence that government agencies, officials, or propaganda outlets were responsible for "affirmative misleading" of the Hungarian rebels.

He said the inquiry disclosed that many radio stations operating without licenses, some clandestinely, "were encouraging the rebels, but we couldn't trace any connection to United States agencies or Radio Free Europe."

Not all Republicans defended Dulles and his policies and not all Democrats criticized him. Alf M. Landon, the 1936 Republican presidential nominee, said at one point that Dulles ought to resign because the Secretary opposed the holding of a summit conference with the Russians. This, said Landon, was "taking the world down a dangerous road that threatens disaster to mankind."

On the other hand, Representative John McCormack of Massachusetts, the Democratic leader of the House, said that while he was not willing to defend the general course of administration foreign policies, he felt Dulles had accomplished some notable results.

"I am firmly convinced that Secretary Dulles has a profound knowledge of the evil of the Communist mind and if it were not for him there would have been greater progress toward recognition of Communist China," McCormack told the House.

Dulles had stood firmly against recognition of the Peiping regime, in part because he felt that Congress would erupt against any other policy. This, of course, was one point of friction with

some American allies, notably Britain. There were other differences, some of which could be laid squarely on Dulles's doorstep.

Because the American Secretary of State reneged on a proposed plan he originated for settlement of the dispute over Egypt's seizure of the Suez Canal, the allied lines of communication were grounded when, in October 1956, Israel attacked Egypt and Britain and France joined in.

At that point, Eisenhower and Dulles faced an agonizing decision: should they support the nation's closest Allies in this military adventure or should they turn against them and back Egypt? Dulles tipped the decision in favor of going into the United Nations to denounce the Allies as violators of the charter and to demand that their troops be pulled out of Egypt. It was a year before the western alliance recovered fully from this shattering decision.

As a strong churchman, Dulles based his policies fundamentally on a belief in the ultimate triumph of faith over atheism. Throughout his career as Eisenhower's foremost adviser on international affairs, he preached the moral rightness of the free world's cause. This may have influenced him at times to greater optimism than seemed justified by the cold, material circumstances.

This optimism cropped out one day early in 1955 when he journeyed across town to Capitol Hill to testify in an investigation by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee into the state of the nation's position in world affairs.

The high-ceilinged caucus room in the old Senate Office Building was packed with spectators who came to see the man they well knew was guiding the nation's course in all of the difficult international decisions.

Dulles sat in the witness chair, microphones propped in front of him. Across a broad, polished mahogany table the committee members, ranged in a long row, presented a majority critical of his policies. One by one they drilled at him with questions, alternating between Democrats and Republicans on a strict seniority basis.

Blinking owlishly at times behind his large glasses and doodling industriously on a pad in front of him as he thought carefully of

his phrases before he used them, Dulles advanced the theory that Russia was "on the point of collapsing" because of economic troubles and because its people hungered for liberty.

Youthful Senator J. William Fulbright, Arkansas Democrat, who was to become chairman of the committee in 1959, took vigorous exception to Dulles's thesis. Fulbright called it unrealistic as, indeed, long, troubulous years proved it to be.

Even though he made his mistakes and talked at times in unsustainable phrases, Dulles nevertheless held the line for peace. The very force of will by which he could drive himself physically for days on end—days that stretched from twelve to eighteen hours—served him well in his determined stand against giving an inch in crises such as those which developed in the Communist Chinese bombardment of Quemoy in 1958 and at Berlin in 1959.

The Quemoy affair demonstrated Dulles's unprecedented relationship with the President. Eisenhower was vacationing at Newport, Rhode Island, getting in as many rounds of golf as possible. Alarmed at the developments in the Far East, Dulles flew in for a two-hour conference.

After he had met with the President, the Secretary of State took the unusual course of holding an off-the-record news conference. In the guise of a "high official," not otherwise identified, he told the world the United States would use force to defend the offshore islands if the necessity arose. The President, of course, had been kept informed of the situation. But there was no doubt in the mind of any of the 100 reporters who heard Dulles that day that the decision was his and he had sold it to Eisenhower.

It was not until his second illness with cancer, however, that Dulles was identified as the country's nearly indispensable man in the operation of foreign policy. There long had been the feeling abroad that, since his 1955 heart attack, Eisenhower was less than a full-time participant in the everyday molding of policies. But despite the carping of the critics, the President continued to be regarded by the vast majority of Americans as the man who was keeping the peace, uneasy as it was, that prevailed in the world.

When Dulles was stricken during the preliminary maneuvers over the Berlin crisis in 1959, there was a sudden realization

among even those who had had few kind words for his policies that the man who thought about everything, negotiated everything, and had a hand in every operation of the State Department was almost irreplaceable.

Representative Thomas E. Morgan, Pennsylvania Democrat and chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, summed up Dulles's position when he said that the Secretary had been "a sort of one-man foreign office for the last six years" and ill could be spared from his post. Fulbright shared similar views, despite his frequent criticisms of Dulles's policies.

Dulles had operated as an individual, carrying in his head an amazing amount of detail on the world's affairs. Despite Eisenhower's repeated praise of the State Department "team," the fact was that Dulles often did not confide in his associates. He paid only nominal attention to the recommendation of the department's career men. When he took a proposed policy action to the President for Eisenhower's approval, it most often was his own brain child.

The white telephone that sat on the table behind the large desk at which Dulles worked had represented the department's direct link to the presidency. Over it the Secretary had talked to the President two or three times daily, in addition to the frequent personal visits he paid to the White House.

Dulles's monolithic operation had left almost no room for other department officials to make close personal contacts with Eisenhower. Nor had his supreme confidence in his lone-handed ability to find the solution for any problem that presented itself encouraged his deputies to contribute in a major way to the formation of policies.

So it was with a tragic sense of loss that Eisenhower announced in mid-April that Dulles was resigning. Garbed in a sports jacket and slacks, the President walked into press headquarters in an Augusta, Georgia, hotel to announce that Dulles was too incapacitated to carry on. The moist-eyed President said he had asked Dulles to "remain as my consultant." Then he launched into a tribute to the man who had personified the administration's foreign policies.

"I personally believe he has filled his office with greater distinction and greater ability than any other man our country has known—a man of tremendous character and courage, intelligence and wisdom," the President said.

When Dulles had told the President that his physical condition would not permit him to continue in office, Eisenhower was stunned by this catastrophe. As if he were a man still clinging to the hope that a miracle would save his Secretary for him, the President announced Dulles's resignation but left up in the air the question of a successor. Asked if it wasn't logical that Undersecretary Christian Herter, who had been acting in the top job after Dulles was hospitalized, would be appointed, Eisenhower replied that there were several men qualified for the post and many things to be considered.

The President secretly had asked Herter to undergo a special physical examination. Herter had suffered for years from arthritis of the hips, making it difficult for him to walk any distance or stand for long. When the report on this examination showed Herter otherwise in good shape, Eisenhower had Herter flown to Augusta, where, at a news conference, he announced his appointment as Secretary. Without a word of praise for his new Cabinet member, the President walked out of the conference and left Herter to shift for himself with the reporters.

This seeming reluctance to give to Herter the title Dulles had worn so long amazed the country. The Senate responded with one-day approval of the Herter nomination by a 93 to 0 vote as if to express its confidence in the new Secretary.

Summoned before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Herter was a man of outward calm who betrayed his inner emotions by tightening and then releasing his knuckles, sometimes twirling his thumbs, and occasionally swallowing with difficulty.

There was no real opposition to this man who turned his blue-eyed appraisal coolly on each committee member who might prove antagonistic. An open pack of cigarettes lay before him, but the Secretary-designate ignored them as he listened to tributes paid by old friends who had served with him in the House. If Eisenhower had been reluctant and slow to appoint him, the Sen-

ate intended to make it up with the speed by which it confirmed the nomination.

Finally the wheel of questioning reached Senator Wayne Morse, the Oregon Democrat who would accept nothing and no man at face value. Lighting his first cigarette, Herter replied in that deep Bostonian voice of his to a series of conjectural questions. Even Morse was surprised by the firmness and simplicity with which the nominee answered. The lean, gray wolf from Oregon said at one point, "I congratulate you. There is quite a bit of merit in what you say." But Morse hastened to add that he didn't agree with Herter's thesis.

The Senate's swift action prodded Eisenhower into breaking a precedent at Herter's swearing-in ceremony. Where the President usually smiled benignly and said nothing, Eisenhower felt that this occasion called for a correction of the impression he had left on the country.

With most of the Cabinet looking on, Herter took the oath. Stepping forward, the President shook Herter's hand and said:

"As you well know, you and I were strongly hoping and praying for Foster's early recovery so that he could take over again his duties as Secretary of State.

"You also know that he and I were one in deciding you were the best man qualified to take over the office. As you take this commission and start on your new duties, God bless you. I know all of the people of the United States hope for your success."

Standing erect without the crutches he often used, Herter told the President, "You can't know how much it means to have your confidence."

"You know you have that," Eisenhower replied.

But the President knew better than anyone else that an era had ended and that the awful responsibility no longer could be placed conveniently on the shoulders of another; reluctant as he was to do it, he must bear it himself.

To the end, Eisenhower would not let the ailing Dulles go. Breaking out a commission as a special assistant to the President, he insisted that he must go personally to the hospital to see Dulles take a new oath. The retiring Secretary of State, who had re-

mained in office long enough to countersign Herter's commission, got painfully dressed and hobbled into the living room of Walter Reed Hospital's presidential suite to receive the President, Vice-President Nixon, and Herter. With Mrs. Dulles looking on, the frail new assistant to the President sat cross-legged in a white upholstered chair, his new commission spread on his knees, to chat with his visitors after the ceremony.

Eisenhower was aware that nothing would ever be quite the same again. Herter, who at sixty-four was trained in the political school of former membership in the House and a tenure as governor of Massachusetts, could never operate as Dulles had. The tall, shy but friendly man with the rectangular face had accumulated a wide background of knowledge in world affairs. He had led the House committee which had come back from a working inspection trip of Europe with recommendations that led to the Marshall Plan.

But Herter was a desk worker, inclined to deal through ambassadorial channels instead of hopping a plane to fly half a world away for personal diplomacy, although his first few months in office found him involved in a lengthy foreign ministers' conference and seldom in Washington. He was a team man, with all of the dependence on subordinates that Dulles never had. He gave no sign that he felt, as Dulles nearly always did, that his personal judgment was infallible. Nor could he speak with the voice of authority with which Dulles had communicated the administration's views to the world.

Once each week, when he was in Washington, Dulles had stood before a microphone in the usually well-filled auditorium of the State Department to answer newsmen's questions and to spell out for the world's capitals the American position on major international issues. Even if they did not agree with the wisdom of his course, reporters generally conceded that Dulles was a master of precise phrasing to achieve the effect he desired. In contrast, Eisenhower lacked any such skill with language and obviously was armed with considerably less technical knowledge.

Dulles's ability in this field contributed to the President's vast admiration and dependence on his Secretary of State. It was an

admiration not easily transferable to another. Nor could the confidence in a successor's judgment ever be quite so deep as to permit such broad dependence again.

There was no doubting Eisenhower's sincerity when he had told us at news conferences that Dulles was one of the greatest Secretaries of State. He described his Cabinet member at one point as "the wisest, most dedicated man I know," adding:

"I believe he has got greater knowledge in his field than any man I know."

He supplemented this later with the observation that Dulles had "acquired a wisdom and experience and knowledge that I think is possessed by no man—no other man in the world."

Such unstinted praise for a subordinate had rarely come from a President. It represented a relationship between the chief executive and the Secretary of State that scarcely ever before had existed in the history of the republic and certainly had not been paralleled in the twentieth century. In fact, many Presidents had had a great deal of difficulty with the men they appointed as their chief diplomatic officers.

Even George Washington had troubles of this nature. The first President remained somewhat aloof in the dispute over internal affairs between Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson and Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton that led to Jefferson's resignation at the end of 1793. But the President had to intervene when he found that Jefferson's successor as Secretary of State, Edmund Randolph, was not supporting the chief executive's policies. Confronted with charges that he had passed information to the French ambassador and was failing to support the Jay Treaty with England, Randolph resigned.

In 1800, John Adams fired Secretary of State Timothy Pickering and Secretary of War James McHenry because of opposition to his policies. When Barnabas Bidwell asked for an explanation of this action, Adams drew himself up to his meager height, planted his hands on his oversized belly, and replied tartly:

"If a President of the United States has not authority enough to change his own secretaries, he is no longer fit for the office."

John Tyler, a Virginia Republican among the Whigs, inherited

a peck of trouble along with the presidency when William Henry Harrison died a month after taking office. The Whigs had the notion that Secretary of State Daniel Webster and Senator Henry Clay ought to run the government. Tyler had his own ideas about that. He got rid of all of Harrison's Cabinet except Webster, retaining the latter only because he showed clear signs of opposing Clay.

We have already seen how Lincoln disposed quickly of the ideas Secretary of State William H. Seward had about running the government. Like Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt ran his own shop. When he took Panama for the canal, he didn't bother to mention his venture in advance to his Cabinet, including his Secretary of State.

Roosevelt was of several minds about Secretary John Hay, whom he had inherited from the McKinley Cabinet. T.R. said of Hay at one point that "his and my views as to the attitude the Nation should take in foreign affairs were identical. . . ." It is more likely, however, that Roosevelt felt in the end as he did when he characterized Hay as "the best letter writer of his age," but added that as Secretary of State, Hay "accomplished little . . . his usefulness to me was almost exclusively . . . that of a figurehead."

Roosevelt had a great admiration for Elihu Root, who became Secretary of State in 1905, and thought him the best qualified man to become his successor. But practical politics finally dictated his selection of Secretary of War William Howard Taft as the 1908 Republican candidate.

It seemed strange to find William Jennings Bryan occupying a figurehead role. But there he stood, under strong-willed Woodrow Wilson. Bryan occupied himself largely with minor treaties, patronage jobs, and the banning of alcoholic drinks from his official dinners. When there were notes to write to Mexico, Wilson wrote them and Bryan signed on the dotted line. When Wilson edged the country toward war after the sinking of the *Lusitania*, Bryan resigned.

During World War I, Wilson's "one-track-mind," as he called it, charted the nation's course without benefit of any Cabinet meetings. In Wilson's subsequent illness, Secretary of State Robert Lan-

sing called the Cabinet members together informally, but Lansing and all concerned were careful not to let word of their action reach the stricken President. Wilson learned that Lansing had summoned the Cabinet to consult on the railroad strike and he demanded and got Lansing's resignation because of the implied encroachment on the chief executive's authority.

With Charles Evans Hughes as Secretary of State, Harding and Coolidge paid little attention to international affairs except for Harding's ill-starred foray into the disarmament-conference field and Coolidge's later approval of the scrap of paper conjured up by Frank B. Kellogg to outlaw war.

Under Herbert Hoover, Henry L. Stimson operated in a far-seeing way. But the country and the world were not interested in Stimson's efforts to summon force against the Japanese invasion of China. The nation's bare-cupboard economic situation was all absorbing at a point where, if there had been strong presidential support of the Secretary of State, America might have made her voice felt in stemming the imperialism which was to furnish the momentum for the counterswing toward communism.

The second Roosevelt was like the first; he could never successfully delegate power to another, no matter how much he felt such a course might be the wiser.

Franklin Roosevelt would not willingly surrender any authority, and seldom even the semblance of it. Custom dictated that he name a Secretary of State so he chose Cordell Hull, a hard-bitten politician from Tennessee whose chief claim to fame was his sponsorship of the Reciprocal Trade Agreements act. In counterpoise, Roosevelt picked Sumner Welles, a strangely urbane intellectual, as Undersecretary of State.

Like a master at the chess table, the President played the conservative, low-tariff Secretary against his underling, whose foreign-policy views more nearly coincided with those of Roosevelt.

While both men worked diligently and vied with each other for White House favor, there was no doubt in either's mind where the final decisions were made on major international issues. Roosevelt was his own Secretary of State, just as he was Secretary of every-

thing else in his administration. The fount of ideas, and their execution, bubbled continuously in the White House. The President might accept advice on details but his brush, and his alone, painted the broad spectrum of foreign and domestic policy.

When Harry Truman succeeded to the presidency, he began slowly but firmly to infuse his personality into the handling of international affairs. Truman called his old friend, James F. Byrnes, to his side to replace the ineffectual Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., as Secretary of State.

The friendship of this oddly assorted pair had been sealed back in 1940 when Byrnes had interested Bernard M. Baruch and others in contributing to Truman's depleted primary-campaign coffers. Byrnes, the whip-cracking, keen-minded, practical politician, in effect, had helped rescue the politically slow-moving clod-hopper from Missouri, and Truman, to his credit, did not forget it. Truman won that primary by a bare 10,000 out of a million votes, a narrow escape from oblivion for a man who was to grow and mature in the presidency as few other men have in this republic.

In the Senate, where they had been colleagues, Byrnes was the teacher and Truman the pupil. But the quirks of politics had made Truman, and not Byrnes, Vice-President and now Truman was chief executive.

We correspondents who had known both men well and who had watched their relationship develop over the years wondered how this humble attitude of the President toward his new chief subordinate would work out. In the early months of his stewardship in the White House, the humility with which Truman automatically clothed himself made him inordinately receptive to the advice that Byrnes gave.

Say what you will, Byrnes was not an accomplished diplomat at the time. His were the ways of congressional give-and-take. He could trade any American out of his socks but that was not necessarily a qualification for the international numbers game. Byrnes usually had dealt with pseudo-gentlemen whose word could be accepted without question, no matter what political rascality they might be engaged in at the moment. But Byrnes learned quickly

that no one could depend on a Russian's promise and he adapted himself swiftly to the cutthroat business in which he was engaged.

Jimmy always enjoyed telling of the dinner party given in the Kremlin at the foreign ministers' conference in Moscow. It was one of those affairs where toasts were offered every few minutes. All of the dignitaries stood on each occasion to raise their glasses on high. It was protocol to kill the vodka at one swallow.

Now Byrnes was a connoisseur of bourbon, and a two-fisted one able to hold his own with all comers. But he sensed that this performance was intended, among other things, to produce some addlepated allied diplomats at the next day's business sessions. Looking around in his sharp-eyed way, Byrnes saw a Russian admiral unobtrusively pour his vodka into a convenient flower pot and fill his glass with water. Byrnes followed suit and throughout the long night he jumped up cheerfully and drank the score or more of toasts, in water.

While Truman outwardly was backing Byrnes to the hilt in these meetings, the President let himself fall into one of those curious incidents that seemed always to be arising to plague the chief executive.

Truman had kept Henry Wallace on as Secretary of Commerce, a decision that might have been dictated in part by the fact that he had beaten Wallace out for the vice-presidential nomination in 1944 and then had broken a tie vote in the Senate to confirm the latter's Cabinet nomination.

Wallace had scheduled a speech before the CIO-PAC convention in Madison Square Garden on September 12, 1946. The Secretary dutifully sent his manuscript to the White House and, receiving no further word on it, proceeded in the speech to attack the Byrnes get-tough-with-Russia policy.

We asked Truman at a news conference if he had read the speech in advance and approved it. He replied that he had. A few days later, when the fire was getting hot, the President hedged, saying that he had not read the entire text.

In the meantime, Byrnes had been on the scrambler from Paris, where he was attending a conference, with demands that Truman clear up the situation. Byrnes said bluntly that if Truman couldn't

keep Wallace from criticizing foreign policy while he was a member of the Cabinet, "I must ask you to accept my resignation immediately."

This was the beginning of friction between the President and his chief diplomatic representative. But Truman was not yet ready to dispense with Byrnes, so he temporized. He forbade Wallace to make any more speeches. Then, under prodding by Byrnes, he decided Wallace must go.

At the time Truman said he had "complete confidence in Mr. Byrnes and his delegation now representing this country at the Paris peace conference. Mr. Byrnes consults with me often and the policies which guide him and his delegation have my full endorsement. . . ."

Truman was extraordinarily sensitive to the verdict of history, however, and he had other thoughts after Byrnes had quit the Cabinet of his own volition. When Byrnes was long out of office and spoke critically of Truman's domestic-spending proposals, the President added a postscript to a letter he sent his former Secretary in which he said, "Since your Washington & Lee speech I know how Caesar felt when he said 'Et tu, Brute!'"

Byrnes fired back that he hoped the President was not going to think of him as a Brutus, because he was no Brutus, and added: "I hope you are not going to think of yourself as Caesar, because you are no Caesar."

The feud between the two old friends produced a curious and confusing footnote to history.

Truman disclosed, in time, a memo he said he had read to Byrnes on January 5, 1946, in which he dressed down the Secretary of State for not keeping him "fully informed on what is taking place" and complaining that he had "received no communication from you directly while you were in Moscow."

The President began the reputed memo by outlining his ideas about how the Cabinet should function.

"My Dear Jim," he said he wrote, "I have been considering some of our difficulties. As you know I would like to pursue the policy of delegating authority to members of the Cabinet in their various fields and then back them up in the result. But in doing that and

in carrying out that policy I do not intend to turn over the complete authority of the President nor to forego the President's prerogative to make the final decision."

Byrnes said he had never heard of any such memo, that he and Truman never had any difficulties about communication between them, and that "not even the President of the United States has the right to substitute fiction for history."

Truman said the contents of the memo were so urgent that "I neither had it typed nor mailed but preferred to read it in order to give emphasis to the points I wanted to make." Byrnes retorted the evidence was impressive that Truman had written the document subsequently merely "to record himself favorably" for history.

Later Truman wrote that Byrnes had "taken it upon himself to move the foreign policy of the United States in a direction to which I could not and would not agree. Moreover, he had undertaken this on his own initiative without consulting or informing the President." This, of course, disregarded the established fact that Truman had made public statements endorsing all of the policies that Byrnes advocated.

Truman's appointment of General George C. Marshall as Secretary of State to succeed Byrnes represented a possibly unconscious reaction to a World War I battery commander's admiration for a professional soldier who had worked his way up to general. With the exception of MacArthur, Truman idolized generals and Marshall represented the President's ideal of a calm, impersonal being who could accomplish anything he set out to do.

Aside from his assignment to China, where he had no notable success in trying to meld the Nationalists and the Communists, Marshall had had no real experience in the diplomatic field. Nevertheless, this soldier's soldier adapted himself to his new role admirably and, as was usual in his case, gave his country the best he had in every waking hour.

But the real brain behind the Marshall secretaryship was Dean G. Acheson, Undersecretary of State, who had not so much to do that he didn't have time to think. Out of the State Department's active and brilliant young Policy Planning Board, with Acheson's

supervision, came the idea for the Marshall Plan of aiding Europe to regain its economic feet. Marshall made the speeches but Acheson had done the advance thinking.

And so it came to pass within a relatively short time that Truman, the Missouri dirt farmer, elevated the broad-A'ed Acheson to the job of his first advocate in the foreign field. Never had two men differed so widely in antecedents, training, and outlook. But they struck flint against steel and there flared the light of greatness.

All was not always well between them. There were times when the intellectual Acheson despaired of the earthy Truman and vice versa. But, on the whole, the decisions were Truman's. His was a Cabinet topped with a brilliant, sardonic thinker. But there never was any doubt whose judgment prevailed.

The President might accept advice but in the end his Cabinet members bowed to the final verdict of the White House man who knew more by instinct than by any acquired learning how the people felt and what they wanted. The contrast between this command position and his successor's dealings with an individualistic Cabinet was sharp.

## 22 The Humphrey Influence



The clock on the wall pointed to 8:30 A.M. Eighteen men of assorted sizes, shapes, and philosophies filed into the long, simply furnished room. Chatting in hushed voices, they found their appointed places in leather-upholstered chairs around a six-sided mahogany table that had been a gift from Jesse Jones.

On the green tinted walls of this historic room hung portraits of Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln. A white-manteled fireplace divided sparsely filled bookcases on one wall. Behind a high-backed presidential chair in the middle of the other side of the table, French doors opened on the White House rose garden.

There was time for comparing of notes or for introspection until those assembled arose, at a minute or two before 9 A.M., when the President of the United States walked smilingly into the Cabinet room. With his crisp, "Please be seated," all took their places. Vice-President Nixon occupied the chair directly across from the President.

After a moment of silent prayer, the Eisenhower Cabinet was ready for the business of the day. Before each member was an agenda of a half dozen important topics. Each departmental head had received position papers on these topics from the Cabinet Secretary, who also had briefed the President either orally or by written summary on what was coming up.

It was all very orderly and methodical, this meeting of the men who advised and influenced the President, each according to his lights. By presidential fiat, Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., chief of the American United Nations delegation; the budget director, the administrator of the Office of Civil Defense Mobilization, and various others, along with White House staff members, were included in the select circle.

The names and the faces changed but the undercurrent of philosophical differences between these men flowed on endlessly.

They were, in the aggregate, conservatives, as beffitted the Republican administration. Their division was a delicate one. It lay between those who believed not in big government, but a bigger government that did more for the people than those on the other side, who felt that an unbalanced budget spelled eventual disaster. Their silent struggle was for the mind of a President who was more inclined than his Democratic predecessors to rely on the judgment of his subordinates.

Secretary of State Dulles, the giant of the Cabinet, ordinarily stood above this polite, internal conflict. But he, too, sometimes was involved in the maneuvering over foreign-aid funds and undoubtedly contributed to Eisenhower's determination to keep spending in this field at a high level.

If Dulles was the high priest of foreign policy, jovial George Humphrey was the keeper of the keys to the administration's fiscal affairs. A practical businessman who had made his own millions, Humphrey hadn't wanted to join the Cabinet originally. He said in taking the job of Secretary of the Treasury he was going "contrary to all my beliefs." He added sagely that "almost everytime a businessman gets mixed up in politics, he falls flat on his face."

Despite his words, Humphrey was a natural politician. He soon had official Washington eating out of his hand. What is more important, he sold Eisenhower on the necessity for drastic measures to balance the budget. Humphrey found a ready ally in blunt-talking Charles E. Wilson, who set out as Secretary of Defense to wring out the arms budget at a time when Russia was challenging the United States for nuclear and missile superiority.

If Vice-President Nixon felt the defense cuts were too deep, if Secretary of Welfare Marion Folsom thought the social services should be expanded, if Secretary of Labor James Mitchell favored more government spending—Humphrey stood at the gate, incisors bared for the fray.

As we have seen, it was Humphrey who sounded the first thundering note of the budget battle of 1957 with his prediction that high government spending would produce "a depression that will curl your hair." Even after he had been succeeded as Secretary of the Treasury by Robert B. Anderson, Humphrey's was the

guiding philosophy to which Eisenhower adhered in submitting to Congress early in 1959 a seventy-seven billion-dollar budget the President called balanced but Democrats contended was "phony."

Perhaps it was untrue, but there was no effective answer from the Eisenhower administration when fiery Walter Reuther, head of the United Auto Workers (UAW), told an unemployed rally in Washington early in 1959 that "the tragedy is that the Eisenhower administration policies are not formed by Jim Mitchell but by Mr. George Humphrey on the quail hunts in Georgia."

The bespectacled Anderson, a youngish, quiet, friendly Texan, did yeoman service for the Humphrey budget-balancing policy when the economic recession of 1958 struck the country only a short time after he had taken over as Treasury Secretary.

Congress was beginning to talk in terms of a tax cut to spur the economy, although this would throw the budget even further out of balance. Even Nixon had stuck his neck out for a tax reduction, supported in this move by Secretary Mitchell. Eisenhower seemed at this point to be wavering. In answering our news-conference questions on the issue, he always left the door open a little for a possible reduction in the levies.

At this point, Anderson took matters in his own hands. He went up quietly to Capitol Hill one day to see two old Texas friends, Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn and Senator Lyndon B. Johnson, the Senate's majority leader. Among them they worked out a gentleman's agreement: neither the Democrats nor the President would surprise the other by proposing a politically attractive tax cut. If taxes had to be reduced to get the economy moving, it would be a co-operative endeavor, with political credit for all. Despite a suggestion by former President Truman for a five billion-dollar reduction, which about matched that urged by the Democratic Advisory Council, Congress did nothing in this field.

The fact that Anderson at first was willing to see a little more money spent on defense and foreign economic aid than Humphrey had been influenced Eisenhower to liberalize his policies somewhat in these fields—but only within the general confines of the Humphrey budget-balancing concept.

Just as Humphrey had a vital ally in Secretary of Defense Wil-

son, so Anderson found a co-worker in Wilson's successor, Neil H. McElroy. The red-haired personable new Secretary, an outstanding industrialist, did his affable best to keep the generals and the admirals in line with the budget limits laid down by Eisenhower within the Humphrey concept.

Wilson was an outgoing character with a penchant for blunt phrasing that kept Washington titillated at a point when it could ill afford to take its mind off a national defense establishment that the Russians seemed to be outdistancing and outmoding.

The white-haired, cigarette-puffing Secretary started off in 1953 with a king-sized blooper when he told the Senate Armed Services Committee, which was holding a closed-door hearing on his nomination for the Cabinet office, that for years he had thought that "what was good for the country was good for General Motors and vice versa." He had been president of General Motors, then a major defense contractor.

Democratic senators who drifted out of the meeting reported to us foot-weary correspondents, long waiting in the corridor, that Wilson had said, "What was good for General Motors was good for the country." Perhaps they thought they heard it that way. In any event, the corrected quotation took so long to catch up to the original version that it didn't do Wilson much good when it did.

The Senate committee was impressed by Wilson's great record as a productionist, but it insisted he divest himself of his General Motors stockholdings. Although he suffered an immediate \$600,000 loss in paper value in this transaction, when he was ready to buy in again after his Cabinet service, lower prices then were prevailing.

Where Wilson could only accede to the committee's demand, Humphrey brought up a logical argument that stopped the senators in their tracks. The nominee for Secretary of the Treasury pointed out that if he sold his stockholdings he could put the money only into government bonds or into banks, over both of which he would have a measure of direct control as Secretary of the Treasury. Nonplussed senators found no answer for this. They decided it would be all right for Humphrey to keep his stocks.

While Humphrey operated in an affable, easy way which

made him a favorite at Washington's cocktail parties and turned away the wrath of his critics, "Engine Charley" Wilson was always sticking not only his toe but his whole foot into hot political waters.

In the midst of the 1954 congressional campaign, when unemployment was a heated topic of discussion, Wilson picked Detroit to toss off a political bombshell. Without spending too much time thinking about his words in advance, Wilson told reporters at a news conference that so far as finding work was concerned, "I've always liked bird dogs better than kennel-fed dogs, myself. You know, one who'll get out and hunt for food rather than sit on his fanny and yell."

This undoubtedly was sound philosophy, so far as the Eisenhower administration was concerned. But it was a dismaying statement for Republican candidates who had hoped to offer the unemployed something more tangible than the opportunity to go out and hunt for work that may or may not have existed.

If he plagued the politicians, Wilson also kept the Pentagon generals forever off balance. He enraged them at one point by observing rather casually at a news conference that "I haven't noticed that it makes a man any smarter to put one more star on his shoulder." When army officers involved themselves in an anti-air force campaign, Wilson waved them off with the observation that "the eager beavers are gnawing down some of the wrong trees."

This man always had a phrase and usually it was pungent. He was summoned to the White House one day for an important conference over what generally was regarded as a yawning gap in the nation's defenses. When he came out, we reporters asked the Secretary what he was prepared to do about the pressing problem of the moment.

Turning away from his questioners, Wilson jerked a thumb back toward the White House and exclaimed: "Ain't my dunghill. Anything to be announced here somebody else ought to announce."

Eisenhower could give up Wilson for a competent successor; he could even let Humphrey go for Anderson. But there was no one else in the President's mind who could equal Ezra Taft Benson as Secretary of Agriculture.

Affable, pious, and persevering, Benson was the target for more political brickbats and dead cats than almost any other Cabinet member of modern times. The man behind the horn-rim glasses carried beneath his furrowed brow the determination to restore the law of supply and demand to an agriculture that was glutted with surpluses, plagued by low prices but still obstinately over-planting itself into the poorhouse.

It was an impossible job that he faced, but Benson tackled it with a vigor inherited from his Mormon forebears. He worked hard at reducing the price supports that most Democrats and practically all Midwestern Republicans felt were necessary to sustain their political futures. In theory, the prospect of lower prices should have induced farmers to reduce their acreage of major crops and to diversify their output. In practice, however, the farmers added to the acreage where they could and poured on more fertilizer to increase production, in an effort to retain the same income level.

As a result, more surpluses piled up; more family farmers found their endeavors unprofitable. It was popular and easy to blame Benson for all of these troubles, especially since he seemed to have a penchant for saying things that irritated the farmers.

Benson got off on the wrong foot early in 1953 when he made a speech in St. Paul, Minnesota, in which he gave the general impression that he was against price supports except in the case of "undue disaster"—his words. The editorial writers had a circus with that one, inquiring how Benson might define "due disaster."

The Secretary of Agriculture was particularly low in spirits when Eisenhower called him to the White House a few days after the speech. The President, however, had a pleasant surprise for Benson. He told his Cabinet member he thought everything he had said at St. Paul was right. But Eisenhower added with a chuckle:

"I'm not sure you should have said it quite so soon."

Fortified by this presidential support, Benson went his determined way despite the hostility with which his ideas were greeted in many farm areas. One day when he was speaking in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, he was the target for a barrage of eggs. The

eggs missed him by a wide margin and Benson shrugged off the incident.

Republican members of Congress, who thought Benson was damaging them politically, ran up against a stone wall when they broached the idea either to him or the President that he resign. In January of 1958 a group of farm-state Republicans in the House decided among themselves that Benson must go. They sent two of their members to ask the Secretary bluntly if he wouldn't resign. He wouldn't. When the congressmen carried their message to the White House, they got the reply the President was standing firmly behind Benson.

Senator Styles Bridges of New Hampshire, the chairman of the Senate Republican Policy Committee, took it upon himself one day to suggest to the President that it might be better for all concerned if Benson were replaced. Bridges reported to his colleagues that Eisenhower froze, made no direct reply, and changed the subject.

The President demonstrated the same kind of loyalty to Admiral Lewis L. Strauss, another controversial figure in his administration. Strauss's difference with members of Congress over atomic-energy matters became so bitter that he decided not to seek reappointment as chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC). Eisenhower speedily nominated him as Secretary of Commerce to succeed Sinclair Weeks, a Yankee conservative of the traditional type who had served in the Cabinet from the beginning. The Senate's 49-46 vote rejecting Strauss marked the eighth time in history it had turned down a Cabinet nomination.

Strauss, who had been around Washington from the time of the Hoover administration, held strong opinions on most matters. His were the views that shaped the administration's atomic-energy policies.

It was Strauss and Secretary Wilson who opposed at a September 1956 meeting of the National Security Council a proposal by Secretary Dulles that the United States take the lead in an effort to ban hydrogen-bomb tests. Dulles was supported by Harold E. Stassen, then Eisenhower's disarmament adviser, and by Secretary Humphrey. Strauss and Wilson contended that Russia could

not be trusted to keep any agreement and probably would continue small atomic-weapons tests which could not be detected.

The issue had political overtones, since Adlai E. Stevenson had suggested as early as April of the same year that the United States offer to halt tests. Stevenson was continuing to make an issue of his contention that the air was becoming dangerously contaminated with radioactive materials by these explosions, and Strauss had fired back a denial.

Although Eisenhower appeared at first to choose to stand with Dulles, Strauss's position was upheld by the administration's political strategists, who felt Stevenson would benefit from any announcement of a test-ban offer. So it was that on September 19 the President made one of his rare decisions overruling Dulles and attacked Stevenson's proposal as "a theatrical gesture." The Eisenhower position left the road clear for the Russians to score a subsequent propaganda beat with their announcement they were stopping their own tests.

Just as he had to Strauss and Benson, Eisenhower maintained an unwavering loyalty to the less controversial members of his Cabinet. The one exception was when Eisenhower listened to the party politicians and nudged Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay into a futile 1956 race for the Senate in Oregon. McKay had been an advocate of the so-called "partnership" policy of private and government development of electrical power projects—a system that failed to gain widespread popularity in the West.

Fred A. Seaton, a Nebraska and Kansas publisher who had run the Eisenhower campaign train in 1952, stepped into the Interior Department to restore comparative quiet to an organization which had been cuffed about liberally by the Democrats for what they called its policy of "giveaways" of natural resources and public lands.

Originally Eisenhower had named Herbert Brownell, who did so much to make the general President, as Attorney General. Brownell, an acute backstage political operator, had had a hand in the selections for other posts in the original Cabinet and had reserved the attorney generalship for himself.

But Brownell's New York law partners told him one day he

could have the choice of staying in politics and quitting his law firm or returning to active practice. Brownell chose to return to the law, and his young assistant, William Rogers, then only forty-four years old, stepped into his shoes as the government's chief legal officer.

Rogers, suave, handsome, and aggressive, put new life in the Justice Department, preparing it in advance for emergencies that might arise. It was significant that when new trouble threatened in the Little Rock, Arkansas, school-integration controversy, Rogers's department was ready with United States marshals to enforce the peace. Rogers was determined there would be no further use of troops if he could prevent it.

A confidant of Vice-President Nixon, Rogers was accounted as a Cabinet member who would be heard from in the political future. Two other Cabinet members also were frequently in Nixon's corner when the inevitable differences cropped up over such issues as bigger spending for welfare programs. They were Postmaster General Arthur Summerfield and Arthur S. Flemming, who succeeded Folsom as Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare.

Whatever their differences, however, the Cabinet members argued them out in orderly manner while Eisenhower smiled benignly upon them. When a majority prevailed, the individuals closed ranks, covered up their disagreements, and presented a united front to the public. This was in marked contrast to the out-in-the-open fighting that had taken place between some Cabinet officials in previous Democratic administrations. In fact, it contrasted sharply with the historical record of American Cabinets from their beginning.

While there was no provision in the Constitution for a Cabinet, this circle of advisers had had its origin in the diplomatic crisis of 1793 when George Washington called in the Secretaries of three departments and the Attorney General for consultation on the so-called "neutrality proclamation."

The first Cabinet—and it was not called by that name until 1806 and not officially recognized by Congress until 1867—was composed of Thomas Jefferson as Secretary of State, Alexander Ham-

ilton as Secretary of the Treasury, and Henry Knox as Secretary of War. Attorney General Edmund Randolph was invited to sit in, although the legal officer wasn't recognized as a full-fledged member until later.

The Cabinet grew in size as the country expanded. With Congress's approval, John Adams added the Secretary of the Navy to his advisers. Andrew Jackson brought the Postmaster General into the group. Zachary Taylor introduced a Secretary of the Interior and Grover Cleveland a Secretary of Agriculture. Theodore Roosevelt installed a Secretary of Commerce and Labor and Woodrow Wilson divided these responsibilities into two departments. Eisenhower added a Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare.

Like Eisenhower, the first six Presidents relied heavily on the opinions of their Cabinet members. Some of the early chief executives even accepted the majority verdict of their advisers on important matters.

There was even discussion of a permanent bureaucracy which reached a peak in 1829 when William Wirt, Attorney General for John Quincy Adams, was not at all sure he ought to resign his post when Jackson came into office. Monroe had appointed him and Adams had retained him so Wirt felt he had a permanent lease on the office. Jackson had other ideas and enforced them.

As a man who could change his course swiftly, Jackson set something of a record when he paraded twenty-two men through six Cabinet posts in two terms and paid virtually no attention to the advice of any of them. His "Kitchen Cabinet," which won its sobriquet by filing into White House meetings through the kitchen entrance, gave Jackson about the only advice he was willing to accept. This group was made up largely of editors and old friends who helped him dole out patronage jobs.

Jackson's Cabinet was rent with discord over the social acceptance of vivacious Peggy O'Neill, a barmaid who had gyrated a flirtatious skirt at the politicians who came to drink grog in her father's Washington tavern. She caught the eye of Major John H. Eaton, a lusty fellow from Tennessee, and when her husband conveniently died at sea, she married Eaton. At about that time, Jackson chose his old friend Eaton as his Secretary of War.

Mrs. John C. Calhoun, the wife of the politically unlucky Vice-President, was the acknowledged social leader of the day. When she refused to receive Mrs. Eaton, Jackson was enraged and his Cabinet divided. Secretary of State Martin Van Buren, with no wife to dictate to him, took Peggy's side. The controversy got so heated that Eaton and Van Buren handed in their resignations. Jackson promptly fired all of the other Cabinet members except Postmaster General William T. Barry.

Jackson's penchant for cutting off the political heads of Cabinet members who didn't do his bidding indirectly resulted in helping establish one of the precedents Eisenhower relied on when the President ordered executive communications withheld from Congress in the Army-McCarthy hearings.

Jackson had fired W. J. Duane as Secretary of the Treasury when the latter refused to transfer deposits from the Bank of the United States, which the President was seeking to abolish. Volatile Henry Clay promptly struck back at Jackson by introducing in the Senate a resolution demanding to know if a paper Jackson was reported to have read to his Cabinet about the bank withdrawals was genuine. Jackson shot down this threat to his executive authority with the snarling reply:

“The executive is a co-ordinate and independent branch of government equally with the Senate and I have yet to learn under what Constitutional authority that branch of the legislature has a right to require of me an account of any communication, either verbal or in writing, made to the departments acting as a cabinet council.”

As we have seen, John Tyler had fired all of his Cabinet except Secretary of State Daniel Webster in his battle with Clay to run his own show. However, elderly James Buchanan was made of no such stern stuff. Buchanan mired the presidency in indecision as the nation was beginning to split asunder and twenty-four individuals paraded through seven Cabinet posts in his term. Near the end of his tenure Buchanan lost all control of the executive power, turning over his authority to four pro-Union Secretaries who formed a regency to administer the government.

As Buchanan's successor, Lincoln invited trouble by including

in his Cabinet four of his defeated rivals for the presidential nomination. Eisenhower avoided any such blunder. He made his political peace with Senator Taft and appointed Governor Earl Warren of California as Chief Justice of the United States. He did take Stassen into the inner circle of his administration for a time and evidently regretted that action.

Among the men in Lincoln's Cabinet were some strong individuals. But the President knew how to play them off against each other and he early demonstrated to them who was boss. He did this by the simple expedient of taking a Cabinet vote on a policy issue. There were seven "no" votes and one "aye," his own. Lincoln announced the result: "Seven nayes, one aye, the ayes have it."

Lincoln put up with a great deal of nonsense from his appointees that was similar, in a way, to Stassen's quixotic campaign to dump Vice-President Nixon from the 1956 ticket. Eisenhower listened to Stassen, let him play out his futile string, and even after that kept him on for a time as his disarmament adviser.

Stassen used his White House position as a base much as self-righteous, pompous Salmon P. Chase of Ohio used his position as Lincoln's Secretary of the Treasury to maneuver for the 1864 presidential nomination. Lincoln was forbearing.

"I am entirely indifferent to his success or failure in these schemes as long as he does his duty as head of the Treasury Department," Lincoln said.

But the day arrived when the President could take Chase's antics no longer and he accepted one of the resignations the Treasury Secretary frequently was handing him. When news of this hit the Capitol, a delegation of senators rushed to the White House to demand an explanation.

Lincoln said that, naturally, Chase had the right to his ambition to be President but that friends of the secretary had been so indiscreet that they had made it embarrassing for the President and his Cabinet member to meet. Remarking that he found such a situation unendurable, Lincoln told the senators that if Chase remained in the Cabinet he was not going to continue to be President. He would resign, he said, and the senators could have

Hamlin, the Vice-President, for President. That ended the matter.

Lincoln subsequently found a great deal of humor in the situation when Chase turned his ambitions toward the Supreme Court after Chief Justice Taney died. Keeping Chase on tenterhooks until after the election, the re-elected President then appointed his former Cabinet member as Chief Justice.

Courageous Andrew Johnson, the swarthy ex-tailor from Tennessee, fought a losing battle with a cabal in Congress when he attempted to fire Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, a wily manipulator who often had opposed Lincoln's policies. Stanton had connived with the Radicals in Congress to push through the Tenure in Office Act, designed to prevent a President's dismissing a Cabinet member without the Senate's consent. This battle led to Johnson's impeachment and his acquittal by a single vote.

The Senate had practically dictated Cabinet and other appointments for a quarter of a century before the Civil War. Grant did nothing to break this invasion of the executive power but the senators ran into an unexpected tartar in bearded, mild-mannered Rutherford B. Hayes.

In a delaying tactic, the Senate sent all of Hayes's Cabinet nominations to committees. Hayes fought this action, with the press supporting his position. Mass meetings of protest were held and the Senate capitulated within seventy hours. It approved all of the nominations, including David M. Key of Tennessee, a southern Democrat, for Postmaster General in the otherwise staunch Republican Cabinet.

Throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century, Presidents gradually regained full control of their Cabinet appointments and maintained amicable relations with these officials. Even when he came into office shortly after the turn of the century, Theodore Roosevelt approached change so cautiously at first that he retained all of McKinley's Cabinet members. Within a year, however, he had begun to make shifts and by 1909 twenty-three persons had held seven posts.

Taft's action in picking his own Cabinet, instead of retaining some of Roosevelt's advisers, contributed to the differences that

arose between these two men and led T.R. back into the presidential arena in 1912.

The Cabinet practically went out of business under Wilson, who was in his way a despot who was determined to end all despots. As we have noted before, the President carried on World War I without a single meeting of Cabinet members as a group. After he was stricken ill in September 1919, Wilson did not meet with his Cabinet again until April 13, 1920, and then only briefly.

The story of the Harding Cabinet unfortunately was clouded by the machinations of Albert B. Fall and Harry M. Daugherty. It was, otherwise, an outstanding group, with Charles Evans Hughes as Secretary of State, Herbert Hoover as Secretary of Commerce, and Andrew W. Mellon as Secretary of the Treasury. Mellon's eleven years in office under three Republican Presidents set something of a record for continuity.

Coolidge took over Harding's Cabinet and soon wished he hadn't been so hasty in retaining some of its members. Fall made his exit but Coolidge was forced to demand Daugherty's resignation when the Attorney General refused a Senate investigating committee access to some of his files. Then, in his elected term, when he sought to install Charles B. Warren as Attorney General, the Senate rejected the nomination.

Coolidge had the same kind of philosophy toward Cabinet members that Eisenhower later displayed—they had been assigned to do a job; let them do it with a minimum of attention from the President. Coolidge was perfectly satisfied, for instance, to sit tight in his don't-rock-the-boat course and permit Mellon to fix the administration's tax and financial policies.

That Coolidge didn't want to be annoyed by the details of government was illustrated one day when Secretary of Labor "Puddler Jim" Davis sent him a file of papers to read and asked if the chief executive agreed with his decision on the matter concerned.

Telling his clerk he had no intention of reading the papers, Coolidge added: "You tell old man Davis that I hired him as Secretary of Labor and if he can't do the job, I'll get a new Secretary of Labor."

Hoover got almost no effective help from his Cabinet in his futile battle against the economic depression that helped install Franklin Roosevelt in the White House. Roosevelt, in turn, was like Jackson, a President who depended on unofficial advisers. Although the Roosevelt Cabinet contained some highly seasoned individualists like Harold L. Ickes and Henry Wallace, and the first woman member, Frances Perkins, it was not an aggregation on which F.D.R. leaned for collective wisdom. In time Harry Hopkins carried more weight with the President than did all of the Cabinet members.

By putting Republicans Henry L. Stimson and Frank Knox in charge of the War and Navy departments, Roosevelt not only gained the services of two knowledgeable men but gave the form, at least, of bipartisanship to the World War II effort. But despite the strong character of these two men, Roosevelt himself was the master of the nation's military effort.

When Truman succeeded to the presidency, he was determined to put the government back into the regular channels from which it had flowed in response to Roosevelt's preference for personalized dealings. Truman had in mind some Cabinet changes and others developed rapidly.

Henry Morgenthau quit as Secretary of the Treasury, his "Morgenthau plan" for converting a conquered Germany into an agricultural state finding no favor with the new President. Miss Perkins left quietly and Harold L. Ickes stormed out in a controversy over Truman's nomination of Ed Pauley, California oilman, as Undersecretary of the Navy.

Truman had an almost unbounded admiration for General Marshall, on whom he called whenever there was a crisis. He listened with respect to the opinions of Dean Acheson. He leaned heavily on the judgment of Fred Vinson, whom he eventually named as Chief Justice. He listened to Robert E. Hannegan on political matters.

But throughout the years of his presidency, there was no question who said the final "yes" or the decisive "no." Truman was equipped with the energy to do things the only way he knew how to do them—the hard way. He had within him the drive to work

long hours because he wanted more than anything else in the world to be on top of his job.

Now energy is a variable thing; it is almost impossible to measure one man's energy against another's. But as was said in the Federalist papers, "Energy in the Chief Executive is a leading character in the definition of good government. . . . A feeble execution is but another phrase for bad execution: and a government ill executed, whatever it may be in theory, must be in practice a bad government."

The question arose, then, as to how much energy a President could summon for his herculean task after he had suffered three serious illnesses. Would bad, or merely indifferent, government result?

## 23 A President is Disabled



The Vice-President of the United States mopped his dripping brow. Richard Milhous Nixon was a tired man as he stood before a hundred correspondents and cameramen. Glaring lights beat down on him as he reported, in a history-making White House news conference, what he had been doing about keeping the presidency in operation in the forty-eight hours since Dwight D. Eisenhower had suffered an occlusion in the cerebral artery on the left side of his head.

The Vice-President was toe dancing on ground that had remained uncharted since the Founding Fathers had left unanswered the question of who determines a President's inability to carry on his duties and what happens to a chief executive who regains his faculties while another is filling the job he was elected to do.

As best he could, Nixon tried to dispel any belief that he had been acting President. No, he said in response to questions, he was not assuming any new powers. Although his job previously had been enlarged somewhat and he had taken a major part in foreign policy, defense, and economic-aid matters, he insisted there had been "no legal changes" in the vice-presidency. Asked how he would define his role, Nixon shot back: "By my title as Vice-President."

He didn't feel, Nixon went on to say, that he had "any more duties or responsibilities" than he had two years earlier when he had been careful not to give the appearance that he had taken over the President's job while Eisenhower lay recovering from a heart attack.

Nixon's brown eyes sparkled, despite his fatigue, as he described Eisenhower's swift recovery. He said the President was "champing at the bit"—an obvious overstatement—to get back on the job. He wanted, he said, to scotch any rumors that the chief

executive was in a condition "which would make it necessary for him to consider resigning." He added that neither the President nor anyone in his official family had discussed or considered any possibility of a resignation.

Every newsman in the room was certain, however, that Nixon had arrived at the White House at nine-fifteen in the morning of the previous day prepared to take over the presidency if he had judged that Eisenhower had been mentally incapacitated by what the laymen, if not the doctors, described as a mild stroke. Each reporter knew, moreover, that two decisions of the caliber usually reserved for personal action by the President had been taken in Eisenhower's absence.

It was obvious to all immediately concerned that for the third time the administration had decided to avoid the difficult issue of any presidential delegation of powers while the chief executive temporarily was laid low physically. Instead, the President would be asked, as quickly as it was possible for him to do so, to sign some official documents to prove to the public that he was still functioning in his job.

On November 25, 1957, Eisenhower had journeyed to Washington National Airport to welcome King Mohammed V of Morocco on an official state visit. When he arrived back at the White House, the President told Mrs. Eisenhower and his personal physician, General Howard McC. Snyder, that he had "felt a chill."

Nevertheless, Eisenhower went to his office at 2:40 P.M., where his personal secretary, Mrs. Ann Whitman, noticed that he was having some speech difficulty. Mrs. Whitman reported this to Sherman Adams and as soon as Eisenhower left his office to go back to the residential part of the mansion and to bed, Adams reported the matter to Nixon.

Dr. Snyder called in other physicians and around 4:00 P.M. they arrived at the tentative diagnosis, which later was confirmed, that the President had suffered a cerebral occlusion.

Jim Hagerty was in Paris, making arrangements for the forthcoming NATO meeting, and it fell to Mrs. Anne Wheaton, the assistant press secretary, to make the announcement that the President had been sent to bed with a "chill." She said Eisenhower

would not be able to preside that night at the state dinner in the White House for the visiting king.

Mrs. Wheaton had not been told of the doctors' findings. The cover-up had begun—"operation reassurance" was under way. The President's illness was to be minimized as much as it was possible to do so. Nevertheless, the Associated Press sent two men to the White House for an all-night vigil, until the regulars could relieve them in the morning, and other wire services followed suit.

It was not until 3 P.M., twenty-four hours after the President was stricken, that reporters were summoned by Mrs. Wheaton to a news conference. Packed in solidly, with some standing on chairs, they heard the woman secretary report that Eisenhower had "suffered an occlusion of a small branch of the middle cerebral artery of the left side" and had a slight impairment in his speech. Flustered by the flood of questions about the medical terms used, Mrs. Wheaton declined to classify the President's illness as a "stroke."

Hagerty flew in from Paris to take charge. At an 8 A.M. press conference the next day he announced that Eisenhower was up, had showered and shaved himself, and had plowed heartily through a breakfast of half a grapefruit, creamed chipped beef, toast and honey, and caffeineless coffee. As was apparent to all, the idea was to create the impression that the President was overflowing with health, despite a minor setback.

While Eisenhower's ability to snap back from serious illness might have seemed to have justified these tactics, the cover-up acted to increase the continuing apprehension about the President's health. Was the public ever being told the real story of Eisenhower's strength and of the vigor which he could summon to the job?

Although Adams said later the President was "almost adamant" about attending the dinner for the king, Nixon stepped in in his stead. At the gay and festive affair, the Vice-President and Mrs. Eisenhower were the only ones present who knew of the seriousness of the President's illness and what it might portend. Shortly after nine o'clock the next morning, when the world knew only that Eisenhower had had a chill, Nixon arrived at the White House accompanied by Attorney General William Rogers. No one

but the principals knew about it at the time, but Eisenhower and Nixon had had some discussions on what should be done if illness struck the chief executive again, as it had done twice previously.

Without any clear legal authority to do so, Nixon and Rogers proceeded to decide if the President was unable to carry on his duties and whether the Vice-President should take over.

Neither Nixon nor Rogers saw the ailing President. But Rogers said he had a "full discussion" with the President's physician and was informed the stroke was "mild and transitory" and did not affect Eisenhower's reading, writing, and reasoning powers. Rogers said he made his finding at the request of the White House staff, which was tantamount to saying that Sherman Adams had directed this unusual inquiry.

"In response to a question by members of the President's staff and after a full discussion with the President's physician about the President's condition, I advised members of his staff that the illness of the President presented no legal problem which would call for any consideration of the possible delegation of presidential powers," Rogers explained later.

But what if Nixon had felt that this third illness of the President was the signal for him to take over? What if Rogers, the Vice-President's closest confidant, had gone along with this decision? A change in the presidency could have been involved in the advice one man gave and the decision another made. To say that it could not happen is to belie the cloudy wording of the Constitution. It did not happen because of the integrity and common sense of two men. To say that it would never happen is to put greater faith in future possibilities and circumstances than prudent men should.

Article II of the Constitution left many gaps through which a designing politician could drive the wagon of desire. It reads:

"In case of the removal of the President from office, or of his death, resignation, or inability to discharge the powers and duties of the said office, the same shall devolve on the Vice President, and the Congress may by law provide for the case of removal, death, resignation or inability, both of the President and Vice President, declaring what officer shall then act as President, and

such officer shall act accordingly, until the disability be removed, or a President shall be elected."

Who then was to define "inability" of the President to continue his duties? Who was to decide when the Vice-President might take over? Who would determine when the President had recovered sufficiently to resume his duties? Could a Vice-President, once having assumed the top office, be ousted from it? Did Congress have the authority to spell out the rules for an exchange of the powers of the presidency and their possible return to the man who originally had been elected to that office?

No two authorities agreed on a procedure which had been in question since 1787 when John Dickinson of Delaware told the Constitutional Convention that the wording of this article was too vague.

"What is the extent of the term 'disability' and who is to be the judge of it?" he asked. The question was never answered.

Eisenhower thought a constitutional amendment was necessary. Former Presidents Hoover and Truman expressed the belief that Congress could settle the issue. Rogers told Congress that the Constitution should be amended "to make it abundantly clear that in event of a President's inability, the Vice President would serve only as acting President, and only during the continuation of the presidential inability. The President would resume the exercise of the powers and duties of his office as soon as he was again able to act."

Eisenhower put his finger on this chief difficulty when he told us at a March 1957 press conference that the reason all Vice-Presidents had been reluctant to step in was "because our Constitution does not provide now whether he would become the President, whether he would be acting President; when the President and how the President would take over again, all of those things are cloudy."

Members of Congress came up with a score of plans, including one by Senator Fulbright providing that whenever the Congress decided the President was unable physically or mentally to carry on, its resolution would be submitted to the Supreme Court to "decide whether or not such inability exists." Chief Justice Earl

Warren killed that and kindred proposals with a letter saying that the Court felt it should not participate in any preliminary decision.

Rogers insisted that, short of a constitutional amendment, the power to decide when a President was unable to carry on his duties lay with the executive department and could not be transferred by congressional action to any other body. Rogers and Eisenhower held that, in the end, the final decision rested with the Vice-President.

Fully aware of this attitude, Nixon made a decision on that November day in 1957 that Eisenhower was competent to continue in his job. There would be no "acting President," with all of the legal challenges any documentary signature might evoke and all of the confusion likely to ensue over whether the President could regain his office once another man had occupied it even for a brief time.

Nevertheless, two decisions of the kind the President usually made personally had to be recorded. There had been preliminary discussion of problems of duplications in the Thor and Jupiter missile programs. A meeting of the President's advisers had been scheduled that day to reach a final decision. Nixon sat down with Adams, Secretaries McElroy and Dulles, Budget Director Percival Brundage, Rogers, and some minor officials to consider McElroy's recommendation that the development of both missiles be continued. Those in attendance were unanimous in support of this proposal and a favorable presidential decision was made in the absence of Eisenhower.

The other decision, projected by Dulles, was that Nixon should attend the NATO conference in Paris in Eisenhower's place. This involved what Nixon later said would have been a "new function" for the Vice-President, since it would have entailed his acting in matters of substance instead of merely in a ceremonial role. The word was given to the State Department and discreetly passed along to allied nations that Nixon could be expected to fill in in Paris for the ailing President.

But Adams had no intention of letting the Vice-President step into this particular limelight. He had called Hagerty, who was in

Paris making the physical arrangements for presidential participation in the meeting. After Hagerty had flown back to Washington, he raised official doubt that Nixon would go to the conference.

Instead, the press secretary offered reassurances that the President was recovering sufficiently and probably would go himself. Despite some adverse medical advice, Eisenhower decided to chance it and did go. Significantly, perhaps, he did not accept the recommendation of some administration officials that he ask Nixon to accompany him.

Adams won that skirmish but, as the crown prince, Nixon showed he was made of tough fiber, too. Eisenhower had scheduled a meeting with congressional leaders and Nixon made it clear he, and not Adams, would preside over this gathering if Eisenhower were unable to attend.

Apprised of the situation, Senator Bridges, who had been feuding politically with Adams for years, sent word he would not be present if the presidential assistant presided. When the congressional leaders met at the White House, with Eisenhower supervising the meeting part of the time, Adams was not among those who attended. Nixon substituted as presiding officer when the President withdrew.

Nixon could shrug off victory or loss in such skirmishes because he was more confident of his footing than any other Vice-President had been when he walked close to the door of the presidency. He was operating under a verbal agreement that came to light in written form on March 3, 1958. Hagerty made public that day a statement of procedure which Eisenhower and Nixon said they agreed was in accord with the constitutional provisions on executive inability. They said the terms of their agreement were "in no sense outside or contrary to the Constitution but are consistent with its present provisions and implement its clear intent."

Hagerty read to newsmen the following agreement:

"(1) In the event of inability the President would—if possible—so inform the Vice President and the Vice President would serve as acting President, exercising the power and duties of the office until the inability had ended.

"(2) In the event of an inability which should prevent the

President from so communicating with the Vice President, the Vice President, after such consultation as seems to him appropriate under the circumstances, would decide on the devolution of the powers and duties of the office and would serve as acting President until the inability had ended.

"(3) The President, in either event, would determine when the inability had ended and at that time would resume the full exercise of the powers and duties of the office."

Hagerty declined to list the officials with whom Nixon would consult under paragraph two of the statement, although they presumably were Cabinet officers. Hagerty also voiced the opinion, for what it was worth, that it would be unnecessary for the Vice-President to take the presidential oath to become acting chief executive. He added somewhat naïvely that this would avoid raising the issue of whether the President could regain the powers of his office.

When John Tyler had become President, Senator William Allen of Ohio had sought ineffectively to have him labeled by congressional resolution as only the acting President. Allen said he feared some future Vice-President might take over the duties during a President's illness and then insist that he had become President. Tyler, who succeeded to the office at William Henry Harrison's death, took the presidential oath and insisted successfully that he was President and not merely an acting chief executive.

This became a powerful precedent in favor of the belief that once a man assumed the full powers of the presidency he could not be forced to relinquish them short of death or the end of his elected term. There was also the legalistic question involved in the Eisenhower-Nixon agreement whether a man who had not taken the presidential oath could sign documents which only a presidential signature could make effective. If, on the other hand, a Vice-President took the presidential oath, could a displaced President come back to reclaim his powers?

There would always be, of course, the practical consideration that no Vice-President with future political ambitions would ever willingly make it appear to the man on the street that he was trying to undercut a President whose illness would be certain to

arouse universal sympathy. Nixon had been correctly circumspect in three Eisenhower illnesses, beginning with the heart attack on September 24, 1955.

On that morning the big garrison flag, which signaled the presence of the President, wasn't flying when sleepy-eyed newsmen arrived early at Lowry Air Force Base in Denver. Eisenhower's early-rising habits had always been a pain in the neck to the reporters whose job it was to cover him. When he didn't arrive, the supposition was general that the President, just back from several days of trout fishing high in the Rockies at Fraser, Colorado, had passed up office chores and gone directly to the golf links.

It was not until 10:30 A.M. that Murray Snyder, then assistant press secretary, put out the information that the President had suffered a "digestive upset." Eisenhower's physician, Dr. Snyder, had determined in the early morning hours that the President had had a heart attack. But Murray Snyder's announcement was allowed to stand for several hours before the true facts were given. So little attention was paid to the potentialities of the situation that Nixon was not notified until thirteen hours after the attack of what actually had happened to the President.

It was a grueling night for Nixon and his friend Rogers, then the Deputy Attorney General. Nixon fled from us reporters to Rogers's house where the two sat and talked of what the morrow might bring, of what they might do, and how they would do it, if Eisenhower's illness proved to be a lingering and possibly fatal one.

There were practical considerations against any move toward becoming acting President while the chief executive still lived. A Cabinet and palace-guard coterie, headed by Adams and Secretary of the Treasury Humphrey, would be certain to oppose any such effort. Attorney General Herbert Brownell probably would not have gone along.

So it was that Nixon and Rogers decided to underplay the situation. Even before the Cabinet, hastily gathered from vacation spots all over the world, met on September 30, Nixon was telling us reporters that the business of government would go on unchanged and uninterrupted during Eisenhower's "temporary illness."

"Under the President's administration a team has been set up in Washington which will carry out his well-defined foreign and domestic policies," the soberly-garbed Vice-President said as he sat on his couch in the living room of his Spring Valley home on the Sunday night after the chief executive had been stricken.

"I emphasize that both cabinet meetings and National Security Council meetings will go ahead in the same way as if the President had not had his illness," he added.

This meant, as we immediately divined, that while Nixon would preside over these sessions, he would not invade the inner sanctum of the presidency. Nevertheless, speculation continued that there might be some delegation of presidential authority to Cabinet members to carry on the business of the government. This move actually was considered but after a September 27 meeting of Brownell, Adams, Nixon, and Rogers, Brownell announced there was no immediate need of delegating powers to anyone.

Nixon called the full Cabinet together three days later, presiding from his own usual place across the table from the vacant presidential chair. Secretary Dulles, accustomed to bearing nearly the full weight of diplomatic problems in any event, discussed the latest Russian arms deal with Egypt.

In a session that lasted two hours and twenty minutes, Nixon outlined the manner in which the government would be conducted while the President lay stricken. An agreement was reached to dispatch Adams to Denver, where Hagerty was making the decisions on all matters that involved Eisenhower personally. Flying to Denver, Adams took command, plumping his weary frame down each night on a cot outside the President's sickroom, for all the world to know that he remained the keeper of the gate.

The Cabinet announced it had found "no obstacles to the orderly and uninterrupted conduct" of the nation's foreign and domestic affairs. Nixon said nobody but the President would make policy decisions, although it remained unclear how the chief executive could make any decisions while he was physically unable to discuss any matter at length with his assistants and remained completely shut off from the news of the world.

Nixon explained that "at the present time the policy decisions

that have been made in the foreign and economic fields are sufficiently clear and well-defined that no changes are needed or contemplated in the near future."

Although the President's recovery was relatively speedy, he was not in condition to make any decisions for days. It was a month and a day after his heart attack before he walked again and he was not sufficiently well until November 11 to return from Denver to continue his convalescence at his Gettysburg farm. Three and a half months elapsed before he sat down again at his White House desk.

A reluctance to disclose immediately the President's actual condition was displayed again when the White House announced on June 8, 1956, that Eisenhower had an "upset stomach and a headache." We reporters who had been barred from the doorway when Eisenhower had doubled up with pain in his middle at a meeting of the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) a couple of years previously were properly suspicious of this announcement. We all knew that the President had midriff trouble of one kind or another, but how to find out what it was?

A part of our job was to tell the American people whether their President was well enough to carry on, to meet all of the demands that were made on him. A number of great reporters did their best to unearth this vital information but unfortunately all of them were frustrated by the virtually unassailable wall of silence thrown up around the chief executive.

Dr. Snyder, a charming, white-haired product of military medicine who was walking sturdily into his eighties, had called in specialists to confirm his diagnosis that Eisenhower was suffering from ileitis. They agreed quickly and the President was whisked to Walter Reed Hospital where he underwent an emergency "ilio-transverse-colostomy" operation.

This was the age when newsmen crossed the line of presidential privacy—if, in fact, any such state existed—to report in detail the ills of the chief executive. Never before had the anatomy of a President been subjected to such searching public inspection.

This was the direct result, of course, of the initial impulse of the President's associates to gloss over any illness. The reporters were

suspicious and full of questions. Dr. Snyder contended that he had withheld the true diagnosis until he and his colleagues were certain of their verdict. While that was excusable, it hardly could explain, once Hagerty had assumed command of the situation, the breakneck speed of medical assurances that the President would be all right, that he would be physically fit to run for re-election. It seemed that Eisenhower, for having undergone an operation, was better than ever.

All of this was in sharp contrast to the manner in which illnesses of previous Presidents had been covered up. In the case of Grover Cleveland, elaborate precautions were taken to hide the fact that soon after he had taken office, for the first time, his doctors discovered a cancerous spot in the President's mouth.

Cleveland was smuggled aboard the yacht *Oneida*, owned by his friend Commodore E. C. Benedict, and there surgery was performed. How seriously cancer had made its inroads was demonstrated by the necessity of removing part of Cleveland's palate, some of his upper jaw, and two teeth in the infected area. Several days later additional tissue was removed.

Unbelievable as it seems in the modern world of news media, the whole performance was achieved in such secrecy that two months passed before an enterprising reporter, E. J. Edwards, wrote in the *Philadelphia Press* that part of the President's jaw had been removed. The White House promptly denied the report and it was years before the facts came out.

There was no evidence that T. A. Hendricks, then the Vice-President, had any intimation that Cleveland had undergone a serious operation. Hendricks was spared the agonizing hours Nixon lived through after Eisenhower's heart attack and the agonizing days of Chester A. Arthur as James A. Garfield lingered on his deathbed from July 2 to September 19, 1881, when Garfield died from an assassin's bullet.

In the full time he lay in pain, first in Washington and then in a summer cottage at Elberon, New Jersey, Garfield was able to sign only one minor state paper. The inability of the chief executive to carry on his duties was apparent and the Cabinet considered asking Arthur to act as President.

The seven-member Cabinet was unanimous in this desire although four of them—including Attorney General Wayne MacVeagh—thought that Arthur actually would become President and Garfield could not reclaim his powers even if he recovered. Nothing was done because the Cabinet felt Garfield should be told of this possibility and the stricken President's doctors feared that the shock of any such discussion would kill the chief executive.

In the eight days that President William McKinley lived after he was shot by an anarchist on September 6, 1901, Theodore Roosevelt operated on the assumption that the President would recover. Told that McKinley was on the mend, Roosevelt resumed an interrupted vacation in Vermont from which he was summoned to take the presidential oath after the President died.

It was, of course, not possible to conceal the physical condition of either of the assassinated Presidents, but when Woodrow Wilson collapsed on his special train at Pueblo, Colorado, on the night of September 25, 1919, there began a seventeen-month period of secrecy and operation of the presidency by proxy.

With the left side of his face drooping, his left arm and leg partially paralyzed, Wilson cut a pathetic figure as he hobbled with help through the Washington railroad station on the way back to the White House, his teeth bared grotesquely in an effort to smile at the sympathetic crowds.

Wilson had been ill before he set out on his campaign to rally the country in favor of the beleaguered Versailles Treaty. A minor stroke, described at the time as a cold, had overtaken him in Paris and he had come home with a series of blinding headaches and the inability to eat more than a few mouthfuls of food while, in the hot summer months, the Senate was battering his beloved Fourteen Points. This, mind you, was the same sort of occlusion of an artery with which Eisenhower had been stricken, but evidently multiplied in its damage. But no one outside of the White House, and only a selected few who worked within its walls, knew anything definite about the President's condition.

Against the advice of his physician, Dr. Cary T. Grayson, Wilson determined to take his fight for the treaty to the country. But

by the time he had made his fortieth speech in Pueblo, the President's strength had failed him.

Two days after he arrived back at the White House, Wilson seemed to be recovering. He was able to go for a short drive and enjoyed a motion picture in the East Room. He read briefly from the Bible and went to bed, from which he was not to arise for months. Early in the morning a massive stroke paralyzed his entire left side and made it difficult for him to speak at all.

Then began the most extended, if not the greatest, deception practiced in the presidency. Strong-willed Edith Bolling Wilson, whom the President had courted and married after the first Mrs. Wilson died in the White House, prevailed upon Dr. Grayson to announce that the chief executive had suffered a "digestive upset." Where have we heard those words since? It was several days before the public was informed that Wilson had suffered a stroke and then the seriousness of the affliction was minimized.

A woman became President then, by proxy. When the question was raised whether the helpless President should resign, Mrs. Wilson ruled that he would not. She wrote in her memoirs that the doctors had supported this decision, feeling that Wilson would never recover if he let go of his highest office. Wilson said later that "it probably would have been better if I had died."

Mrs. Wilson turned a deaf ear to suggestions that the President permit the Cabinet or the Senate to certify him as disabled. For two months while the chief executive was unable to perform any duties, she barred even Joseph Tumulty, the President's trusted secretary, from his bedside. In this period twenty-eight acts of Congress became law without action by a President who was unable, even with assistance, to affix his signature to a document.

Perhaps it was because, even while he was stricken, Wilson represented an indomitable force that Marshall made no move to test the provision of the Constitution which said the Vice-President shall take over the duties of the presidency in case of the inability of the chief executive to carry on. When it was obvious, by any unbiased appraisal, that Wilson could not carry out his duties, Secretary of State Lansing called the Cabinet together. Its mem-

bers could not decide, however, who would determine the President's inability.

When Lansing took it on himself to suggest that Marshall be called in, Grayson and Tumulty, the President's secretary, closed ranks. Tumulty said that "if anybody outside the White House circles attempted to certify the President's inability . . . Grayson and I would stand together and repudiate it." This was, in essence, the kind of reaction Nixon might have faced by the palace guard if he had tried to take over after Eisenhower's heart attack.

In contrast to the intimate details furnished on Eisenhower's illness, the public knew almost nothing of Wilson's condition. The Senate was so curious it sent Senators Albert Fall of New Mexico and Gilbert Hitchcock of Nebraska on a disguised mission to the White House to learn what they could about the President's health. Admitted to the sickroom by Mrs. Wilson, they found the chief executive in one of his brighter and wittier moods. They found, certainly, no evidence of mental disability.

Mrs. Wilson would not let Marshall see the President. The fear of the White House cabal was such that the Vice-President was never told officially of the nature of the President's illness. Instead, J. Fred Essary, correspondent of the *Baltimore Sun*, was commissioned to inform Marshall of what had happened in such a way that the Vice-President could make no use of the facts officially.

In the period when he was in ignorance of Wilson's true condition, four Republican senators offered their support if Marshall would move to claim the office. But the Vice-President made it clear he had no taste for "civil war."

"I am not going to seize the place and then have Wilson—recovered—come around and say 'get off, you usurper,'" he said.

Meanwhile, with Mrs. Wilson guarding access to the President, the chief executive got only the information his wife thought he could assimilate without disturbing the critical balance that kept his mind and body alive.

Tumulty tried his best, for instance, to get through to Wilson the accurate assessment that the League of Nations covenant would be killed in the Senate unless the President agreed to a compro-

mise. Mrs. Wilson resisted Tumulty's efforts successfully and the course of a nation was changed. Nobody challenged Mrs. Wilson's solicitousness for the President's well-being. But Wilson might have been willing to sacrifice his ebbing life if he had been convinced that an action of his would have headed off the isolationist binge which followed the treaty's defeat.

The people would have understood and would have been sympathetic if they had known the extent of the President's illness. He would have needed to call only through a recognized representative such as the Secretary of State for support of a reasonable compromise and the deed would have been done. Emotional Americans would not have countenanced criticism of what they regarded as the last desperate effort of a dying man to guarantee the peace. But the course of events did not change in that direction and the moving finger wrote history in an adverse turn.

Americans had always entertained the notion that being their President was a man-killing job. They rather expected the man they had elected to take over all of their troubles to weaken physically under the strain. They looked for the shadows to appear under his eyes and from the very beginning they were not disappointed in this somewhat macabre expectation.

Six weeks after he took the oath of office in a kingly ceremony in New York City's refurbished City Hall on April 30, 1789, George Washington was stricken painfully with a fever from what his doctors, such as they were, called a malignant carbuncle on his left hip. Washington was in such pain that the city authorities roped off Cherry Street, in front of the President's house, so that he would not be annoyed by the bustling traffic of the day. Washington's recovery was so slow that he had his carriage altered so that he could stretch out full length in it in necessary trips about the city.

The first American President who died in office, William Henry Harrison, was certainly hounded toward an early grave by political job seekers. "Old Tippecanoe's" last delirious words were, "I cannot stand it . . . don't trouble me . . . these applications, will they never cease?"

Actually Harrison owed his death to a habit he had formed as a

country gentleman of doing his own marketing for meats and vegetables. When he slipped out of the White House early one rainy morning and walked to the nearby markets, he contracted a cold that developed into pleurisy which he could not withstand at the age of sixty-eight.

Zachary Taylor died in office with a rather clear indication that the public's demands on the time and energy of the President caused his demise. "Old Rough and Ready" seemed physically tough at the age of sixty-six when, on July 4, 1850, he felt it necessary to respond to suggestions that he make a series of patriotic speeches at the Washington Monument, where a mammoth picnic was in progress.

The boiling Washington sun almost did the President in and he retired to the White House to cool off. A teetotaler, Taylor slaked his thirst with glasses of ice water and cold milk. In between these drinks he took aboard a large amount of cherries and wild fruits. Within four days he was dead of what was called cholera morbus.

There seemed little doubt that the belated discovery he had been sold out by his friends contributed to Warren Harding's death. The strikingly handsome Harding had become a broken and disillusioned man by the time he arrived back in Seattle, Washington, from a trip to Alaska in the summer of 1923.

While he was returning he had received a coded message that had brought on a near-collapse and a heart attack in Seattle. The public knew nothing about it, but for several months Harding's heart had been troubling him. He could not sleep in this period except by propping himself up in bed with pillows.

Transported to San Francisco, Harding was taken to the historic Palace Hotel. There physicians pronounced his condition as grave. Five days later, while his wife was reading to him an article complimenting him for the "calm man" he was supposed to be, the President died of a blood clot on the brain. It was certainly an oversimplification to say that Harding had been killed by the unfaithfulness of his friends. But who can say that this was not a contributing element?

History may never know the full and exact story of Franklin Roosevelt's illnesses. There exists some evidence that Roosevelt

suffered a series of mild strokes—similar in many ways to the one which struck Eisenhower—in the years of 1943 and 1944. A war was on then and the cover-up was all-inclusive compared with any which could be applied in peacetime. The extent of the knowledge of those who reported his activities to the nation was that in the winter of 1944 Roosevelt had a bad cold, bronchitis, and possibly a touch of pneumonia.

There was never any certainty about Roosevelt's physical condition. We reporters who saw him twice weekly were struck by the shifting changes in his appearance. On Tuesday we would decide among ourselves that this man was dying because he looked like a barely moving corpse. To us he appeared to sit dispiritedly at his desk, his face ashen, his lips drawn, and his abnormally heavy chest shrunken.

On Thursday we would march into his oval office and find the President in good color, alive and vibrating. He would be jaunty, wisecracking, and responsive to his sensitive finger tips. It would be a day in which the gauntlet would be thrown down, challenges would be accepted, and excitement would electrify the too brief conference. What did you say to the people about a man like that? How could you tell them that he was old, gaunt, worn, tired, and exhausted on one day when you knew that forty-eight hours later he might again be the challenging crusader, riding forth to battle with his banners flying high?

There is in all men with long-borne afflictions a reservoir of energy they seem able to tap at will. It was so with Roosevelt, whose mental powers had blossomed when his legs withered with polio. As a blind man develops extrasensory perception in hearing and smell, so Roosevelt's chest and arm muscles expanded enormously when his legs buckled. Once I saw him swing himself by his arms alone up a long ramp at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier to deliver in an un hastened breath a eulogy of the war dead. This great physical reciprocity, however, was outdistanced by the mental brilliance of a man who could never quite bring himself to admit defeat in any circumstances.

It was this never-say-die attitude that he took with him the day he went to Congress to report on the Yalta Conference in 1944.

He could forget political considerations then, after his fourth election, to speak from a wheel chair in the well of the House.

Actually, he had had a slight stroke—of the same type that had overtaken Eisenhower—on his return journey to the United States. His speech was somewhat impaired on that occasion; the bell-like tones were garbled. But the explanation that he was having trouble with a new set of false teeth was accepted by those who had ridden this carousel of ever-changing appearance in a President.

The people followed Franklin Roosevelt in leg braces and a wheel chair because they had faith in this man's devotion to his job. The very verve with which he greeted each new problem excited their imagination. He who could barely walk, who traveled on his bulging arms and the strong muscles of his chest, could lead them.

They were not so sure, however, about a man who felt that to put together 160 swings, more or less, at a golf ball in thirty-six holes represented a satisfying accomplishment. After all, they read the sports pages, and there were men depicted on them doing it rather nonchalantly in 130 swings or fewer.

After his heart attack, Eisenhower conceded to us that he couldn't put in as many hours on the job as he might like to do. But he always insisted that he would not be a part-time President. At a time when Democrats were charging that if he were re-elected he would delegate much of his authority, Eisenhower told us on March 8, 1956: "I have said that unless I felt absolutely up to the performance of the duties of the presidency, the second I didn't, I would no longer be there in the job or I wouldn't be available for the job."

Despite editorial suggestions of a number of newspapers that he ought to resign, Eisenhower made it clear he had no intention of doing so. He said that speculation he might quit and turn his burdens over to Nixon was "the worst rot I have heard since I have been in this office." He was reported to have told a close friend at about this time, "The presidency may be a job you die from, but it's not a job you resign from."

Eisenhower was only reflecting, as all Presidents did, a natural

reaction to the inoculation of power. Perhaps the virus was inanimate when it was injected into the veins, but there it encountered such active ingredients that it became the dominating force of life. Once a President, never a commoner again. It were better to be a poor President than none at all.

But there remained in the mind of the man on the street some doubts about Eisenhower's ability to handle the far-reaching responsibilities of his job. The President himself had contributed to this feeling by his own statements about restrictions on his activities because of his health. He had said after his heart attack, and before his other two serious illnesses, that "my future life must be carefully regulated to avoid excessive fatigue."

Certainly Eisenhower was an adequate President in many ways. But the question remained whether he had the necessary energy to do a bang-up job. A really top-notch performance required an inspirational political leadership and until he discovered the effectiveness of the veto in 1959, this kind of leadership had remained undisclosed in his make-up.

## 24 The Political Hat



Whipped by a raw wind, the rain beat down mercilessly on the cavalcade of open cars as they moved slowly down the crowded street. A blizzard of confetti, torn telephone books, and rolls of paper swirled down on the rain-coated, umbrella-bearing spectators who lined the sidewalks and pressed against the police ropes.

In the rear seat of the second car sat a man bundled in a dark blue admiral's cape. Jammed on his head was a battered old felt hat, turned up at the front and running rivulets of water from the sides, as he moved his massive head to smile and wave at the cheering throng. At his side sat a little, black Scotty, sodden and miserable as only a wet dog could be.

Franklin Roosevelt on that day in 1944 was wearing one of the most important hats of the presidency, symbolizing his captaincy of a political party. The battered felt had carried him through three successful presidential campaigns. This was to be the last.

The world was at war. The problems of the presidency could ill afford to spare this man for a moment. And yet Roosevelt, who had patched together the Democratic party in its modern crazy-quilt image, perforce must doff his military, diplomatic, and administrative hats to clap on his political headgear when the party called.

There had been ugly rumors during the campaign about the state of the President's health. Robert Hannegan, the party's national chairman, had become worried about them. For on Roosevelt hinged not only the party's chance for four more years in the White House but the fate of hundreds of minor candidates. Hannegan pleaded with Roosevelt's friends for the President to show himself in the campaign.

"After the people have seen him," said Hannegan, "they can make up their own minds about his vigor and health."

And so a President who had wanted to limit his bid for a fourth term to a few speeches from Washington and who was to be dead within a few months rode fifty-one miles through New York City streets in the pelting rain and cold wind to convince the people that he was able to carry on. He was putting into practice his realistic view that "you have to get the votes first—then you can do the good works."

Roosevelt knew in full measure the truth of Woodrow Wilson's observation that a President "cannot escape being the leader of his party except by incapacity and lack of personal force because he is at once the choice of the party and the nation."

Roosevelt had rebuilt the disorganized and strife-torn Democratic party which had won the 1932 election by default from a Republican administration the people felt offered them no hope in coping with the economic depression. In four years, the Democratic administration had spent ten billion dollars in its efforts to relieve the plight of the "common man" and the Republicans found in 1936 they couldn't beat Santa Claus.

But the Roosevelt reconstruction went far beyond mere cash. He brought together the divergent elements of labor and the farmers; he managed to get the southern conservatives to go along with the northern liberal spenders; he won the Negroes to the Democratic side; he played ball with the bosses of the big-city machines. Out of this curious conglomeration had come the strength that was to control the White House for twenty years—until Eisenhower came along.

Only once in these twenty years had the Repulicans been able to win Congress—in 1946 when irritations with rationing and a shortage of meat blew them into power. But their losses in 1948 and 1950 again reduced them to the semibankrupt political state in which the Democrats were suffering in 1932 when the depression brought their party back to political solvency.

As the new President, elected by a popular majority of more than six and one-half million votes, Eisenhower was presented with the same opportunity to rebuild his party that had fallen to Roosevelt. But unlike his Democratic predecessor, Eisenhower

had little taste for practical politics; his party hat fit him badly and was uneasy on his head.

Throughout his tenure, the public-opinion polls showed the Republican President retained his personal popularity even when his party was nose diving, as it did in a startling manner in the 1958 elections. Where Roosevelt had demonstrated that a President could carry his party with him to control the legislative branch, Eisenhower showed no ability to put together a combination that could win for others, even when his own name was on the ticket.

It is true the Republicans managed to gain hair-edge control of Congress in 1952 when he first was elected. But GOP candidates won their controlling margin in the House by polling only 49.8 per cent of the total national vote while Eisenhower was getting 55.4 per cent. The difference, of course, was in the South, where Eisenhower did very well but GOP Senate and House candidates got almost no votes at all. Despite personal campaigning by the President, the Republicans promptly lost Congress back to the Democrats in 1954.

In 1956, Eisenhower rolled up a landslide margin of 57.8 per cent of the popular vote but his party's candidates failed to regain control of the House or the Senate when they got only 48.8 per cent.

There was no doubt the President would have been happy to have changed this situation. There was no questioning the sincerity of his often-expressed belief that the future course of the nation was at stake in the struggle between the two major parties. It was, in his view, a conflict between the Republican "savers" and the Democratic "spenders."

As he told us over and over again at news conferences, Eisenhower's concept of the Republican party's course went back to Lincoln. He usually shortened the famous Lincoln quotation, which ran:

"The legitimate object of government, is to do for a community of people, whatever they need to have done, but can not do, at all, or can not, so well do, for themselves—in their separate, and individual capacities."

By way of definition, however, Lincoln said that the functions of government should include "all which, in its nature . . . requires combined action, as public roads and highways, public schools, charities, pauperism, orphanages, estates of the deceased, and the machinery of government itself."

In modernizing Lincoln's creed, Eisenhower pictured his administration as liberal in its concept of government relations with human beings and conservative in its approach to economic affairs. There was strong evidence, however, that where these two objectives clashed, Eisenhower felt that the kind of economic policy represented by a balanced budget must prevail.

In 1956, on the night of his re-election, the President spoke in brave words of "modernizing" the Republican party. A few days later he told us at a news conference he would work "industriously and incessantly" for "some change in the understanding the public has of the Republican party."

In defining modern Republicanism, he said, "It is a type of political philosophy that recognizes clearly the responsibility of the federal government to take the lead in making certain that the productivity of our great economic machine is distributed so that no one will suffer disaster, privation through no fault of his own."

Eisenhower said he believed in the decentralization of government and in the free-enterprise system, adding that "to have this free enterprise health, you must have first, integrity in your fiscal operations of government; second, you must preserve a sound dollar or all our plans for social security and pensions for the aged fall by the wayside, they are no good; and thirdly in this, dispersion of power."

This, then, was the guiding concept when the Republican administration confined its activity to warnings against inflation as living costs climbed. The same guidelines caused it to move grudgingly when an economic recession hit the country early in 1958—a recession that generally was regarded as a major contributing factor to the Republican election disasters in the fall. As a man who had been conspicuously willing to see both sides of many questions, Eisenhower found only one answer to the budget argument—it must be balanced.

Democrats contended that what they called a "dollar-sign image" had been planted on the GOP administration because Eisenhower was taking his advice from the wealthy men he preferred as his social companions.

Essentially a distant individual, the President kept his relationships with others well-compartmented. Although he held the greatest admiration for Dulles, the President's relations with his long-time Secretary of State were nearly always business and rarely social ones. Even Adams, who for years was the individual closest to him in his administration, never was one of those Eisenhower chose as a golf or luncheon companion. Vice-President Nixon infrequently joined in the presidential golf games and almost never was a dinner guest unless it was an official affair.

Eisenhower showed no desire to establish social relations with scientists, educators, and molders of public opinion who might have tossed out new ideas in the informality of conversation with a relaxing President. Neither did he care to have politicians around him in these periods away from his desk. There might have been an exception if Senator Taft had lived, because a warm and genuine affection, which had its beginnings in a golf game at Augusta, Georgia, was developing between the two men before Taft died.

There was none among the dozen or more bridge-playing cronies Eisenhower usually chose for his companions who would offer the practical political advice of a Taft. Instead, most of them were either industrial leaders or old army friends.

Ever present was George E. Allen, a Mississippian who had parlayed a pleasing personality and a money-making ability into the directorships of a host of corporations. Allen knew his politics but never discussed such matters with the President. George Humphrey often was the President's host at his Georgia plantation. And when Eisenhower took off for a golfing vacation, William Robinson, chairman of the board of Coca-Cola, was almost certain to go along.

Other frequent companions included such big business leaders as W. Alton Jones, chairman of the board of Cities Service; Clifford Roberts, New York financier and head of the Augusta Na-

tional Golf Club; Barry Leithead, president of Cluett, Peabody & Company; James C. Black, Washington representative of Republic Steel Corporation; Jerome Franklin of the American Cyanamid Company; John J. McCloy, board chairman of the Chase National Bank; Sidney Weinberg, New York investment-firm partner; and General Alfred M. Gruenthal, president of the American Red Cross.

Whether these men ever gave him any political advice and whether he heeded it if they did, Eisenhower's association with them as his only close friends did nothing to assist Meade Alcorn, then the Republican National Chairman, in his effort to snatch off "the 'big business' false-face that the Democrats placed on us years ago." Nor did it aid Alcorn in removing the dollar sign the GOP chairman said the Democrats had painted on Republican vests.

Like those of the other politicians, Alcorn's relations with the President were strictly business. In fact, the national chairman often found himself telling Adams and the latter's successor, General Wilton Persons, many of the things he would like to have discussed directly with Eisenhower. Alcorn's successor, Senator Thruston B. Morton of Kentucky, found he, also, had to resort to the Persons pipeline to get matters before the chief executive.

It was not that Eisenhower shirked any campaign duties, for he went about the country in both 1954 and 1958, when he himself was not running, exhorting the people to elect a Republican Congress. In 1954 he made ten major addresses in what was not only a physical ordeal for him but a notable political failure. On the eve of his departure on a campaign trip in 1958, the Scripps-Howard newspapers commented editorially that, as President, Eisenhower had given "dignity and stature to the office." The editorial added:

"But as a political leader, Ike has saved his zest for the golf course. Certainly he has not worked at building his party. Rather he has seemed bored with politics and that, in our opinion, is an important reason for the apparent low ebb of Republican fortunes."

Harry Truman once said the presidential duty he got the most kick out of involved his role as head of the Democratic party.

"A politician is a man who understands people," Truman said. "He's got to understand the country."

But there was no allure for Eisenhower in the delicate intricacies of compromising dissimilar viewpoints, of maintaining discipline, and of rewarding the faithful. Nor did he appear to have the priceless ingredient of political leadership—the ability to sense and respond to the need of the people in shaping public policy.

While he spoke glowingly of recasting the image of his party into a more progressive mold, Eisenhower declined to take any steps against Republicans who resisted these efforts.

"I have no right and no desire to punish anybody," he said, lining up with Calvin Coolidge, who felt it was never his duty to "attempt to coerce Senators or Representatives, or to make reprisals."

"The people sent them to Washington," Coolidge explained one time. "I felt I had discharged my duty when I had done the best I could with them. In this way, I avoided entirely a personal opposition, which I think was of more value to the country than to attempt to prevail through arousing personal fear."

Whatever he may have thought privately about some Republicans who bucked his program, Eisenhower never drew any personal issue with them as Roosevelt often did with Democrats who opposed his proposals.

The President told us with a wry smile one day that it was not in him to get out a club and go after his political enemies, as Truman had done.

"I never try to hold up clubs of any kind," he said. "I just say 'this is what I believe to be best for the United States' and I try to convince people by the logic of my position. If that is wrong politically, I suppose you will just have to say that I am wrong, but that is my method and that is what I try to do."

It added up to a stunning surprise for the politicians, then, when Eisenhower suddenly reversed his field in 1959 and began using the veto club to beat into submission a Congress dominated by the Democrats with a nearly two-thirds majority.

Aroused by what he regarded as the greatest threat to the nation's stability, inflation, Eisenhower vetoed Democratic spending bills right and left. Where once he had been tagged as almost "New Dealish," Eisenhower took a hard turn to the right, where most of the Republicans in Congress resided.

Given their first taste of practical presidential leadership, GOP members of the Senate and House rallied to the budget-balancing cause. A coalition of Republicans and conservative Democrats provided the necessary votes to prevent the overriding of all of his vetoes except one. His rejection of a second-round water-projects bill, which actually had been trimmed below his budget-expenditure totals but carried projects to which he was opposed, was overridden. It was the first of 147 Eisenhower vetoes that had failed to stand.

Encouraged by his success in this form of negative leadership, Eisenhower plunged into the political initiative he so often had shunned in the past. For six and a half years he had stuck by the concept that it was not proper for him to comment on legislation but suddenly he was convinced that the voice of the President was needed to obtain from Congress the kind of labor-reform legislation he—and apparently a majority of the American people—believed was needed to curb racketeering and other abuses.

So Eisenhower went to the people with a vigorous appeal for support of a tough-fibered labor bill welded together by Republicans and southern Democrats in the House. The result was a surprising victory for that measure in the House and a compromise with the Senate that gave the President what he regarded as satisfactory legislation.

The man who, more than any other, engineered this turn in Eisenhower's course was Representative Charles Halleck of Indiana. He had replaced the ailing and aging Representative Joseph W. Martin, Jr., as House minority leader at the beginning of the 86th Congress.

A tough-talking, fast-thinking, hard-fighting politician of the practical school, Halleck knew where and how to drum up the Democratic votes needed to pass a bill that organized labor was opposing with all of the powerful weapons in its well-stocked

arsenal. That the House took no action in 1959 on a civil-rights bill was obviously part of the price the GOP had to pay for the southern votes needed in the labor-bill battle.

In this case Eisenhower got the willing support of the Republicans. There was no need for him to threaten or cajole them, as he would have been unlikely to do in any event.

It was not in character for Eisenhower to react as Truman had when a delegation of Democratic House members called on the then President to ask him to give an appointment to a party colleague who had opposed Truman's program and had been beaten at the polls.

Truman sent the delegation packing with the emphatic statement that "that so-and-so will never get any government job as long as I'm President."

Although Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona said that in espousing "modern" Republicanism Eisenhower was talking in terms of a "splintered concept of Republican philosophy," the President lifted no finger toward preventing Goldwater from heading the GOP senatorial campaign committee.

Once Eisenhower told us at a news conference that he couldn't look to Senators George Malone of Nevada, William E. Jenner of Indiana, and Joseph R. McCarthy of Wisconsin for help in trying to put over a legislative program "for the good of the country."

Yet he endorsed Jenner, avoided public criticism of McCarthy, and let Malone use the White House to launch an unsuccessful campaign for re-election in 1958. After calling on the President, Malone came out to announce he would welcome Eisenhower's support for re-election. The President's aides let this go by in silence.

Nor would staunch backing of the administration's legislative program bestir presidential help when it was needed most. Senator H. Alexander Wiley, Wisconsin Republican, risked his political life by backing Eisenhower's internationalist foreign policies despite his home state's record of isolationism. Challenged in the primary, Wiley had to swim alone. Even in this critical contest the President would not break his rule against interference in nomination battles.

Eisenhower always insisted that in making appointments he put "the good of the government" first and politics second. He said while it was true that political considerations were taken into account, neither the Republican National Chairman nor anybody else "has got a right to veto or attempt to veto any selection I may make for appointment to any office." The real issue, of course, was not one of a veto but whether the President was willing to co-operate with his appointments in helping to build party strength.

Eisenhower bristled at the idea that financial contributors should be rewarded with jobs, particularly those in the diplomatic field.

Questioned at a 1957 news conference about the appointment of one such financial angel to an ambassadorship, the President replied hotly that "if anybody is ever recommended to me on the basis of any contribution he has ever made to any political party, that man will never be considered. I never heard it mentioned to me as a consideration, and I don't take very kindly at suggesting I would be influenced by such things."

We reporters who had seen heavy campaign donors rewarded with high posts wondered to ourselves about the nature of the political vacuum in which a President could be operating if he believed none of that was going on in his administration.

The President's apathy toward political matters puzzled the party wheel horses as much as they were bewildered by his ability to get elected and re-elected while his party was being rejected. This man who wouldn't play the game as they knew it went his charmed way while they struggled to survive. Their instinctive reaction was to check the President off their list so far as effective campaign help was concerned and to go it alone.

This decision surfaced for all to see when, in advance of the 1958 congressional elections, the chairmen of the Senate and House campaign committees openly advised their members there was no need to fly the Eisenhower banner in their campaigns if they felt support of the administration's policies would not be popular among their voters. Neither Senator Andrew F. Schoeppel of the senatorial group nor Representative Richard M. Simpson of the House committee agreed with Eisenhower's analysis that the

GOP failure to regain control of Congress in 1956 was because "the United States has not yet been convinced that modern Republicanism is with us and is going to be the guiding philosophy of the Republican party."

Simpson said that while he was all for Eisenhower's "peace and prosperity program," he personally preferred "the Republicanism of Lincoln and Taft." He complained that the White House hadn't given much aid to efforts to elect Republicans to the House.

"In the areas of practical politics, that is, a wise use of the executive branch in building up party strength, the Administration has been inept," he said.

Eisenhower made an effort to compose party differences early in his second term. Many a Republican House member and senator was surprised with an invitation to sit down with the President for a breakfast of bacon and eggs. Eisenhower confided that these affairs were about the only ones where he got the chance to eat what he liked best, since Dr. Snyder otherwise kept him on a strict diet.

To supplement these personal contacts, the President formed the habit of sending little notes to those who voted right in Congress, expressing his appreciation. Now and then he found time to visit Capitol Hill for Republican social gatherings and party policy meetings.

But all of this had a somewhat hollow ring. Old pros like tough John Taber, a New York House member, remained unconvinced that they should follow the President. Taber said he didn't know just what a "modern Republican" stood for, but he was convinced that the more modern version didn't "think things out as carefully or as fully as the old-line Republicans used to do." Taber's opinions were important to the administration because the New Yorker was a powerful member of the House Appropriations Committee. That committee had a life-or-death lever on the finances available to the administration to pursue its political course.

It was noticeable that Taber and others who expressed views contrary to the President's got no less warm welcome when they went to the White House. It was also noticeable that men like Senator Clifford P. Case of New Jersey, who supported the Presi-

dent wholeheartedly, went unrewarded by an invitation to breakfast at the White House or to have a sundown drink with the chief executive.

It was not surprising, then, that Republicans rode off in their own individual directions in the 1958 elections. Nor was it surprising that, smarting under the national defeat which overtook them, some of them were eager to blame Eisenhower for their misfortunes.

The fact that the President's luck turned bad early in 1958 provided an additional incentive to rebel against even the intermittent leadership he was offering. Early in the year the national economy went into a tailspin. In the midst of these troublous times, the Adams-Goldfine disclosures flared into the headlines. By midsummer the marines had landed in Lebanon.

From the Democrats came a rising swell of criticism that the President had no firm, workable foreign policy to apply to the world's danger spots. He was blamed for losing the propaganda initiative to the Russians. It was Eisenhower's fault, his critics said, that the Soviets were able to put up a one and one-half ton sputnik before the United States could send more than a grapefruit whizzing into outer space.

This was an era in which GOP Representative Joe Holt of California, a Republican running for re-election, complained:

"For some reason, people don't think Ike's running things. They don't think he knows what's going on. I tell the people I only wish they knew the President as I know him. And I wish he showed to the public the fight and fire he displays and the leadership I know he exercises back in Washington."

Unlike many of his colleagues, Holt was re-elected. But his exception only proved the rule to some of those who felt, rightly or wrongly, that the President had let his party down. These Republicans read into the 1958 election returns an acceptance by the voters of the Democratic contentions that the people were uneasy over Eisenhower's lack of leadership in the presidency. Political opponents had charged he was letting others run the government. They said he lacked the sense of urgency required

to meet the nation's problems. They added that he lacked the energy to do his job.

Notwithstanding the polls that showed the President's personal popularity still at a high point, his party leadership was brought under frontal attack at a dramatic meeting of the GOP National Committee at Des Moines, Iowa, in January of 1959.

The Republicans had gone to the farm-belt city to lick the wounds inflicted on them by the Democrats in the previous November's elections and to try to find a way to reverse this trend in 1960. Eisenhower sent a message to the meeting in which he said he deeply regretted "that some people look upon our party as a kind of hibernating elephant who wakes with a mighty trumpet blast at election time and then rests calmly until the next campaign. Political activity must be a matter of unremitting effort."

When he stood up to make the opening talk at a public session of the committee, Representative Simpson tossed the President's own words back at him. Tall, squarely built, and pale-faced, Simpson was caustic as he sounded the dissatisfaction of the Republican conservatives.

He was tired, Simpson said, of going around the country and being told that nobody knew what the policies of the party really were. He called on Eisenhower to make a clear statement of Republican principles—on the conservative side, of course. Moreover, Simpson said bluntly that Eisenhower ought to give the party some of the "unremitting effort" the President expected from others. Although every member there would have said publicly that Eisenhower was a great leader of the party, the majority showed its inner feelings with enthusiastic applause.

Senator Goldwater, who had replaced Schoeppel as chairman of the Republican senatorial campaign committee, had expected to be there to add in person his particular brand of presidential baiting. But he was grounded in Chicago by bad weather and so he sent along by telegram a challenge to Eisenhower similar to that laid down by Simpson.

"The elephant will come out of hibernation when it knows in what direction it will point its trunk," Goldwater said. Then, in

obvious reference to some of Eisenhower's legislative proposals, the Arizona senator called on the Republicans to "declare against centralized government" and to "quit copying the New Deal."

Alcorn responded to these assaults on the President's leadership with the customary call for party unity. Alcorn said there was enough room under the Republican tent for those who disagreed with the direction in which the party elephant was headed.

In group action, the National Committee adopted a resolution praising the "wise and able leadership" of Eisenhower and Vice-President Nixon. But only State Chairman Daniel E. McLean of Massachusetts stepped forward personally to defend Eisenhower.

"I do not agree with these Republicans who are criticizing the President," McLean told his colleagues. "I am proud of his leadership. I hope we can come up with another Eisenhower so that we can win again in 1960." When I asked him what he meant by "another Eisenhower," McLean replied: "I think we have got to have a Rockefeller to win."

This reference to Nelson Rockefeller, who had won the governorship of New York when Republicans were losing almost everywhere else in the preceding November, indicated the subsurface uneasiness over whether Nixon could defeat the Democratic choice if the Vice-President won the 1960 Republican nomination.

Nixon had taken a middle-of-the-road course in the controversy over "modern" Republicanism. Observing that he hoped all Republicans "would want the party programs geared to the problems of the modern age," Nixon said, "I don't wish to divide Republicans into groups. The President's program is the program of the Republican party."

The Vice-President was the obvious choice of a majority of the National Committee members to be the party standard-bearer in the following election. But Rockefeller's New York victory had rocketed him into prominence and there were a substantial number of committee members who made it clear they would not be adverse to having him as a candidate if they felt Nixon couldn't win.

Rockefeller was a pleasant-faced, soft-spoken, and persuasive scion of a line of very rich men. He had served the Eisenhower

administration effectively but had quit because he was disheartened by his inability to crack the Humphrey economy bloc. Rockefeller had campaigned within the administration for a more imaginative approach to international economic problems but had got nowhere, despite the fact that Nixon was on his side at the time. He had retired to join his brothers, the grandsons of fabulously wealthy John D. Rockefeller, Sr., in the issuance of reports that called, among other things, for greater defense spending than Eisenhower was willing to permit.

With no need to make money, Rockefeller early had found himself in government service. Franklin Roosevelt named him head of the Office of Inter-American Affairs. Truman made him chairman of the International Development Advisory Board which recommended the "Point Four" technical-assistance program for underdeveloped nations.

Eisenhower had used him to draft the organizational chart for the new Department of Health, Education and Welfare, naming him as undersecretary when the department was brought into being. Eisenhower had appointed him in 1954 as a special presidential assistant to assess the psychological aspects of foreign policy. He quit this job in 1955 but returned to Washington in 1958 as a member of a consultive committee on reorganization of the Defense Department. Then Eisenhower chose him as head of the President's Committee on Government Reorganization.

Despite all of these assignments, Rockefeller made it perfectly plain he didn't want to bear the Republican administration's label in his contest with Democratic Governor Averell Harriman. He pounded at Harriman on state issues, avoiding discussion of national affairs.

Rockefeller and Nixon had been friends for a long time but the gubernatorial candidate would have been well-pleased if Nixon had passed up New York in his campaigning. However, Nixon was pledged to give help to Representative Kenneth B. Keating, who was seeking the senatorial seat vacated by Irving M. Ives, and so the Vice-President went to New York anyway. When his absence from the city during Nixon's visit began to assume em-

barrassing proportions, Rockefeller flew in and arranged an early morning breakfast with the Vice-President.

When it was over, Rockefeller came fresh and smiling up the corridor to where reporters awaited him at a barrier. What about reports that he was unenthusiastic about having Nixon aboard his campaign wagon? Just bunk, he replied. Would he be a candidate for the Republican nomination in 1960 if he defeated Harriman?

"I have no interest in the presidential nomination," he replied soberly. Pressed for a statement that he would serve out his full four-year term if elected governor, Rockefeller dodged smilingly. He had "every present intention" of doing that, he said. Beyond this he would not go.

That afternoon, while we were flying west to Wisconsin, Nixon summoned reporters aboard his plane for an unusual mid-air press conference. Adopting an air of the more the merrier, Nixon practically invited Rockefeller to get into the 1960 race against him. He said he regarded the forthcoming party contest as a wide-open affair.

Nixon told us that as early as 1955 Eisenhower had informed him he was "consciously trying to build up a number of strong leaders in the party." The Vice-President said he agreed with this strategy, although it was obvious to all of us present that this indicated—as the President himself had done in other ways—that Eisenhower would give his endorsement to no single individual as his potential successor.

The President subsequently was careful not to take sides between Nixon and Rockefeller. When British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan conferred with Eisenhower over the Berlin situation in March 1959, eyebrows were raised because Nixon was not invited to sit in on these talks. Asked at a news conference if this indicated he was remaining neutral, the President replied that Nixon was busy with other matters.

"I have no idea of tempering my actions or my own thinking according to the possibilities of a political contest that may come about at some future date," the President said.

Eisenhower had said previously he had felt no responsibility to

groom a successor. Nevertheless, the chief executive's decision to send Nixon to open the American fair in Moscow and his inclusion of Nixon in his talks with Khrushchev opened vistas of experience offered few other Vice-Presidents in history.

## 25 The Vice-President



Once when he came home from a lengthy and arduous campaign tour in 1954, Vice-President Nixon found his elder daughter, Patricia, had begun to take piano lessons. As a fair-to-middlin' piano player himself, Nixon proceeded to give out with fatherly advice. Practice, he said, was the thing that counted. Practice, practice, practice would make perfect.

Patricia, eight years old at the time, like most of her generation, was at no loss for an answer. When she had heard her father out, tapping a toe a little impatiently, she sent him on his way with this reply:

"If you had gone on practicing like you tell me to, you might have gone to Hollywood. Then when you died, you'd be buried in an important place."

If the vice-presidency didn't seem to Patricia to promise even an important burial place, neither had the office seemed important to the American people, except in the instances where something had happened to their elected President.

The vice-presidency was, after all, only an afterthought office. It was glued into the Constitution by weary Founding Fathers after a weekend study at the tail end of what had been a humid Philadelphia summer in 1787. After political parties had arrived on the scene, it mostly had been filled by drawing a name out of the hat of political convenience. Geography, rather than genius, had been the criterion for second place on the ticket.

Despite its low estate, the office had produced ten of the first thirty-five Presidents, seven of them by accession after the death of their supposedly more illustrious running mates. For a little less than one third of the time since the nation began, the American people had a chief executive who came from this shelf that had seemed to offer an aspiring man only political oblivion.

To jest about the vice-presidency became traditional, especially

among the men who filled the office. However, the time would arrive when earnest young men with a mission, like Henry Agard Wallace and Richard Milhous Nixon, would warm the seat of President-in-waiting without quips. By the grace of Presidents who smiled on them, they would make a functioning organ of the appendage the Founding Fathers had attached to the executive and legislative branches of the government.

To be Vice-President, under the Constitution, was to be the presiding officer of the Senate—with a tie-breaking vote—and to be the successor if a President died, became disabled, resigned, or was impeached. Beyond that the Vice-President had no mandate and John Adams was not pleased with his station when he was installed as the first one. Adams, a tactless, sarcastic man who had no especially notable achievements to show for his fifty-four years of life up to that time, described his job as “the most insignificant office that ever invention of man contrived.” Nevertheless, he was not insensitive to the fact that a heartbeat missed by Washington might make him President, for he said, “I am vice president. In this I am nothing but I may be everything.”

Jefferson, who, like Adams, later was to be promoted to the presidency, found the second office a medium of “semi-retirement” in which he could write a parliamentary manual and plot the political strategy to take over the top job. This latter activity was to engage a number of Vice-Presidents.

As the years rolled by, the office itself slowly underwent transition. It always seemed to progress more in its periods of influence and importance than it retrogressed in its times of vacuity. But even with its net gains, the vice-presidency remained the butt of disparaging remarks by many of those who held it and some who did not.

To an active man like Theodore Roosevelt, the office was “not a steppingstone to anything.”

“I fear my bolt is shot,” he said shortly after his election.

To Thomas R. Marshall, who understudied Wilson for eight years, the Vice-President was “like a man in a cataleptic state; he cannot speak; he cannot move; he suffers no pain; and yet he is conscious of everything that is going on about him.” Marshall liked

to tell the story of two brothers who disappeared from their home.

"One ran away to sea and the other was elected Vice President, and neither of them was ever heard of again," he would say with a broad grin.

After serving as Speaker of the House, John Nance Garner felt himself "a spare tire on the automobile of government," traveling as Vice-President in "the no-man's land somewhere between the executive and legislative branches."

"A great man might be Vice President," Garner said, "but he can't be a great Vice President, because the office itself is unimportant."

In his inelegant but pungent way, Harry Truman said at one point that the vice-presidency was "about as useful as a cow's fifth teat." And Alben Barkley bemoaned that the office "requires four years of silence," which would have been the supreme punishment for him if he had followed any such tradition.

Perhaps because it was considered so relatively unimportant, the vice-presidency was not bound by tradition. All sorts of men filled it and they did all manner of things. The office probably reached its lowest level when Aaron Burr, who later would be tried for treason, presided over the Senate with two murder indictments pending against him. The office would be used by men like John C. Calhoun for political intrigues and it would be disgraced by men like Schuyler Colfax in the Crédit Mobilier scandal. But it would survive a succession of nonentities until the twentieth century brought it to a fuller measure of usefulness.

In part, the office was what the man in it made of it. It was more often, however, what the President made of it. Presidential attitudes toward the men who walked in the second-place shadow were varied. Only occasionally did the President hold the common-sense view that the only other official elected by all of the people should be given commensurate responsibilities, although the Constitution failed to sketch even the broad outlines of such duties.

Washington found in John Adams a kindred spirit, a man who believed in the dynasty of state, if not of family; a man, in short, who wondered out loud if he should not address the President

formally as "Majesty" or as "Elective Highness." The first President recognized Adams as his heir apparent and took steps to consult his Vice-President and to provide that the No. 2 man should preside over the fledgling Cabinet, as Adams did at least once in Washington's absence.

But Jefferson made the vice-presidency something apart when he held the office. When Adams suggested that Jefferson visit France to bind up relations with the new revolutionary government there, the Vice-President replied coldly that any such excursion was outside his constitutional domain. This was the first instance in which a President found he could not boss his second in command, if the latter proved recalcitrant. There was not available to Adams, of course, the political party leadership which, for practical purposes, would dictate that most subsequent Vice-Presidents accept the President's slightest wish as their command.

It remained for another Adams, John Quincy, to put a Vice-President in his place. The ambitious Calhoun had maneuvered himself into a position where he was endorsed both by Adams and Andrew Jackson and thus was assured of being Vice-President. After Adams had been elected chief executive by the House, Calhoun sent a message to the new President outlining Cabinet choices which would be acceptable to the southern bloc in Congress. Adams, a stocky, aloof but acid-tongued Puritan, exploded and the warfare between him and his Vice-President lasted until Jackson came to the presidency.

Calhoun had the vacant honor of being Jackson's first Vice-President. But when he became entangled in the Cabinet row over the social acceptance of Peggy Eaton, the relations of Calhoun with Jackson became estranged. When Jackson learned that Calhoun had criticized his conduct in the War of 1812, the President wrote the Vice-President that he "never expected to say to you . . . 'Et tu Brute.'" More than 100 years later Truman employed the same phrase to register his vigorous reaction to criticism of his policies by James F. Byrnes.

Jackson elected to make Martin Van Buren Calhoun's successor as Vice-President and then to advance him to the presidency. A pudgy, side-whiskered machine politician who was adept at in-

gratiating himself in the proper circles, Van Buren rode Jackson's coattails into the presidency at the close of an era in which Secretaries of State and Vice-Presidents were considered prime material for the chief executive's job. Not since Van Buren had a Vice-President whose chief executive served out his term been able to win election to the presidency.

Inexorably the vice-presidency moved on to another appointed phase on an April day in 1841 when William Henry Harrison died, in part the victim of what Horace Greeley called a plague of "office-hunting locusts." The son of Daniel Webster, sent as a Cabinet representative to Williamsburg, Virginia, to notify the new President of his duties, found John Tyler playing marbles with his two sons.

As we have already noted, Tyler established the precedent that a Vice-President becomes President, not just acting President, on his predecessor's death. An experienced politician and a lawyer, Tyler went to some pains to establish this precedent. He took the oath of the presidency, administered by Justice William Cranch of the U.S. circuit court of the District of Columbia.

To nail matters down, the new chief executive had Cranch certify that "the above named John Tyler personally appeared before me this day, and although he deems himself qualified to perform the duties and exercise the powers and office of President . . . without any other oath than that which he has taken as vice president, yet as doubts may arise, and for greater caution, took and subscribed the foregoing other [oath] before me."

After Tyler, the vice-presidency became the steppingstone to the White House, by presidential death, for Millard Fillmore, Andrew Johnson, and Chester A. Arthur in the nineteenth century. The advent of the twentieth century brought Theodore Roosevelt to the White House.

Roosevelt hadn't wanted to be Vice-President and William McKinley hadn't wanted Roosevelt on the ticket with him. For that reason the placid, broad-browed McKinley was polite and distant with his new second man. He ignored Roosevelt's belief, expressed in recommendations made in 1896, that the Vice-President should be "consulted by the President on every great party question."

"It would be very well," Roosevelt had said, "if he [the Vice-President] were given a seat in the cabinet. It might be well if, in addition to his vote in the Senate [in case of a tie] . . . he should be given a vote, on ordinary occasions, and perchance on occasion a voice in the debates."

But when McKinley was assassinated and Roosevelt became the chief executive, his ideas had undergone a change. After he had acquired a Vice-President of his own in Charles W. Fairbanks, T.R. was of no mind to permit his understudy to build up political support for a future bid for the top position. Although Fairbanks towered physically over the President—at six feet, four inches he was the tallest of the Vice-Presidents—he was no match politically for the bouncy chief executive. In four years of battling—and not all of it was backstage—Roosevelt cut his second man down to size.

The battle between the two was intense, since Fairbanks represented the conservative element of the Republican party which was stronger in Congress than Roosevelt's supporters.

Roosevelt was able to prevent Fairbanks from attaining his ambition to be the Republican presidential nominee. But, while T.R. managed to install William Howard Taft in the top place on the ticket without too much trouble, the old guard retained power enough to nominate reactionary Representative James S. Sherman as Taft's running mate. Sherman, dignified and able, was no political tyro. He had been close to Uncle Joe Cannon, whose dictatorship of the House of Representatives had not yet been challenged successfully. Cannon's power frightened Taft who was timid and inexperienced in dealing with the complex giant of a Congress that sprawled on Capitol Hill.

It is recorded that Taft approached Sherman hopefully with the proposal that the Vice-President take over the job of representing the President in the House. Nixon was to accept such an assignment for both Houses of Congress more than forty years later, but Sherman thumbed Taft's proposition down.

"You will have to act on your own account," he told Taft. "I am to be Vice President, and acting as messenger boy is not part of the duties of a Vice President."

Although Sherman was renominated with Taft in 1912, the

President long before had ceased attempts to maintain any close relationship with his second man.

When Marshall was inaugurated as Vice-President with Wilson as his chief, the average man from Indiana, who felt that he was too small to look dignified in the Prince Albert coat he had to wear, had every right to expect that the student of government who was his boss would take every advantage of the opportunity to make use of the second-highest office in the nation.

But this was not to be. Wilson was a one-man operator. All he required of Marshall was support—which the Vice-President sometimes found it difficult to give—for the President's policies. While Wilson churned for progress, Marshall's idea of what the country needed was, as he said, "a good five-cent cigar." Wilson's only concession to the second office was to ask Marshall to preside over the Cabinet while the President attended the Paris peace conference. When he sat down with the Cabinet on December 10, 1918, Marshall was the first Vice-President to attend such a meeting since John Adams.

In Wilson's first term, when the Vice-President's possible usefulness was being ignored, Marshall seems to have denied his needed consent to a plan which would have put Charles Evans Hughes into the White House immediately if the Republican candidate had won the 1916 election, while the fighting in Europe was in progress.

Colonel E. M. House had written Wilson before the election suggesting that "if Hughes is elected—which God forbid—what do you think of asking both Marshall and [Secretary of State] Lansing to resign, appoint Hughes as Secretary of State and then resign yourself? This would be the patriotic thing to do. . . ."

In 1886 Congress had made the Secretary of State the next in line of succession after the Vice-President, a provision that stood until Harry Truman got the law changed with the explanation that he did not believe a President who had come into office by death of his predecessor should have the power to appoint his own successor. Thereafter the Speaker of the House became the next in line after the Vice-President.

Wilson and Lansing apparently agreed to close the sixteen-

week gap that would have existed in 1916 between the election and the inaugural if Hughes had won. But there is no record Marshall ever acquiesced to the plan.

When the vice-presidency passed to Republican hands, Harding honored the thin, taciturn little man who had been his running mate by inviting him to sit in on Cabinet sessions. Characteristically, Calvin Coolidge took his seat at the foot of the table and kept his mouth shut. Although he evidently knew little of the scandals that were brewing, Coolidge learned much about the operations of the government under Harding. He said later the experience he gathered was "of supreme value to me when I became President."

Before Coolidge had a chance to indicate whether he wanted his own Vice-President to continue the practice of attending Cabinet sessions, Charles G. Dawes unlimbered his underslung pipe long enough to declaim that this involved a "wrong principle." Dawes said a President ought to have the unfettered right to pick his own confidants. He added that no tradition ought to be established under which a future President "might face the embarrassing alternative of inviting one whom he regarded as unsuitable into his private conferences, or affronting him in the public eye by denying him what had generally been considered his right."

This statement was the preliminary to a stormy career in which the bumptious Dawes harangued the Senate about its archaic rules, cost Coolidge a Cabinet member by failing to arrive on time to break a confirmation tie, fought with his boss on the farm issue, and wound up with four votes for the presidential nomination when Herbert Hoover won the prize in 1928.

Dawes gave way to olive-skinned Charles Curtis, part Kaw Indian and all politician. Curtis's tenure was noted for a protocol rumpus over where his hostess, his sister, Mrs. Dolly Gann, should be seated at Washington dinner tables. There also was the politically painful 1932 campaign incident in which Curtis told a heckler at the Clay County, Iowa, fair that the average voter was "too damn dumb to understand" what the Republican candidates were talking about.

Nobody ever had that trouble about Garner; you always knew exactly what he was talking about. Garner had picked up the nickname of "Cactus Jack" with his efforts in the Texas legislature to make the cactus, rather than the bluebonnet, the state flower. He was interested in such down-to-earth matters—and in people.

As an organization man who played poker with the right crowd, Garner climbed the party-leadership ladder to the post of Speaker of the House. His liberalism was of the orthodox kind, built on his advocacy of tax reductions for the little man and public-works programs for the unemployed. The 1932 convention deal that gave Roosevelt the needed support from Texas and California made Garner Vice-President in an administration that in the end was to appall him with its free-handed spending.

Like the first Roosevelt, F.D.R. had had some grandiose ideas about expanding the use of the vice-presidency. In 1920, when he himself was running for the job, Roosevelt had authored a campaign pamphlet advocating full presidential consultation with the Vice-President. In furtherance of this idea, Garner was invited to sit in with the Cabinet. There the Vice-President's naturally conservative tendencies roiled the waters and eventually made such meetings perfunctory affairs in which the real business of the administration went undiscussed because its plans might leak to the conservative opposition.

In earlier days, Roosevelt had consulted with Garner often. While the President did not always take the advice of his cactus-browed No. 2 man, he respected Garner's political judgment of what Congress would accept and what it was likely to reject in the period when the lawmakers were having some afterthoughts in the wake of their 100 days' spree.

In his own right, the tough-fibered Garner was a colorful and forceful character. A Tabasco-tempered individual, he had pounded four gavels to splinters during his first week as Speaker of the House. Although as Vice-President he said, "I never talk about national affairs," the imprint of his opinions on the body politic was never quite so well illuminated as when craggy-browed John L. Lewis damned the Vice-President roundly for opposing labor legislation. To Lewis, who could turn a pungent

phrase with the best of them, Garner was "a labor-baiting, whisky-drinking, poker-playing, evil old man."

Garner would have been hard put to deny any of these allegations except that which attributed "evil" to him. In calmer moments even Lewis would not have pressed that charge. Certainly, however, Garner opposed the Wagner Act and urged Roosevelt to take a public stand against sit-down strikes, advice that F.D.R. did not take. If this was "baiting," Garner was ready to let labor make the worst of it.

Those who lost money to the Vice-President never downgraded his poker-playing ability. His "board of education," where many a liquefied blow was struck for liberty, was well known and well frequented on Capitol Hill.

On Saturday mornings it was routine for a small, select group of reporters to call around at the Vice-President's office, exchange pleasantries with Mrs. Garner, who served as his secretary, and be told to "go right on in."

When we opened the door to his private office, the Vice-President might be sitting with his feet cocked on the desk, reading a newspaper. His greeting was always the same: "Hi'ya boys! Go pour yourself a drink." There followed the ritual of a visit to a small washroom which opened off his office, the pouring of a drink in an ordinary glass tumbler, sans ice and preferably—from Garner's standpoint—without water added. The reporter who came out with a glass less than full or with its contents a shade lighter than the rich brown color of the rye drew immediate inquiries from the Vice-President about the state of his health.

Beyond the arrangement by which he gave the President the benefit of his advice in Cabinet sessions and weekly White House visits with the Democratic leaders of Congress, Garner's contribution to the vice-presidency was to revive the individuality of the office. He demonstrated that the second man in government has the means at his command, if he will use them, to make his weight felt, even if he disagrees with the President.

It was precisely because Garner did disagree so often and because he openly opposed the third term that Roosevelt cast him

aside in 1940 in favor of his Secretary of Agriculture, Henry Wallace.

The boyish-looking Wallace, with the unruly shock of hair, the shy and bashful smile, had little appeal for the convention delegates who were to love him—if not enough—four years later. He was a former Republican, a dreamer who bordered on the mystic, and he wore the pink badge of liberalism. In this period, even Eleanor Roosevelt felt Wallace was “too idealistic—and that makes him a bad politician.”

But Roosevelt was tired of pulling against the conservative anchors of the party. He wanted a man he felt he could trust to go along with the moves he foresaw the war in Europe was going to demand. So Wallace became not only a regular attendant at Cabinet meetings but the first Vice-President to cross the line into the field of executive operations and decisions.

Roosevelt's July 30, 1941, order appointing Wallace as chairman of the new Economic Defense Board carried the vice-presidency into an area from which it subsequently retreated and which it did not regain even under Eisenhower's liberal interpretation of the uses to which the office could be put in the management of domestic and foreign affairs.

In fact, Eisenhower rejected Nixon's undercover bid to head the State Department's Policy Coordinating Board because he said he did not think the Vice-President should engage in executive activity of this kind. It went unmentioned in Eisenhower's explanation that Undersecretary of State Herbert Hoover, Jr., was the chief complainant against Nixon's entry into this field—and Hoover was backed by George Humphrey.

We who kept a close check on Nixon's bid for executive responsibility knew how disappointed the Vice-President was when Eisenhower denied him the opportunity to gain experience in the field where his ability had been least tried in his public career.

Wallace had enjoyed that responsibility as head of what later became the Board of Economic Warfare (BEW). There he bossed an organization that included as board members the Attorney General, the Secretaries of State, Treasury, War, Navy, Agriculture, and Commerce. For a while Wallace also headed the Supply

Priorities and Allocations Board, which later gave way to the War Production Board (WPB) with a full-time head.

For all practical purposes the Vice-President was in a position to become a czar over industry, mining, agriculture, and foreign trade. Instinctively an empire builder, Wallace flung his outriders around the world and soon was busily engaged not only in stockpiling strategic materials but in indirect attempts to make over the economies of the countries which were supplying them. This was in the period when the Vice-President was talking about installing TVAs all over the world and Senator Arthur Vandenberg was ridiculing his proposals as offering "a bottle of milk for all the Hottentots."

In the process of remaking the world as he knew it, Wallace was running roughshod, in his reach for power, over some other rather active characters in the administration. Since power is a tangible commodity in Washington, others who measured their ego in terms of it resented the openhanded way in which the Vice-President was accumulating it. They knew that power may never be bought, but it sometimes can be seized. These men were of no mind to permit Wallace to walk off with it quietly.

It was inevitable, then, that Wallace should collide with the ambitious and entrenched men who were jealous of their own position in a loosely run administration where individuals swam or sank by their ability to churn the waters sufficiently about the President to arrest his attention. One of those who deplored the expansion of Wallace's authority was tight-fisted Jesse Jones, the white-haired bulwark of conservatism from Houston, Texas, whose only business with the Roosevelt administration was to keep it from going over the falls of complete bankruptcy. The day he had to come to Congress to ask it to wipe out two billion dollars of uncollectable assets, so that the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) could balance its books, was Jones's darkest hour. But the confidence Congress had in this man—and lacked in Wallace—was displayed by the Senate, which passed the bill relieving the RFC of these bad debts in thirty seconds, without debate.

Roosevelt was delighted to have about him men who held strong opposing views and could become hell-raisers at the drop

of a hat. But at times the President was forced to choose reluctantly between these political gladiators. It is enough to say that Jones did Wallace in. When the showdown came at the White House, the Jones view prevailed and Roosevelt withdrew from his Vice-President the power that he had granted, just as easily and as quickly as he had given it.

The Senate, over which Wallace was assigned by the Constitution to preside, had little use for the Vice-President. There was in the Senate no camaraderie with this politically offbeat man, no bent elbows in the back room, no swapping of stories in the lounge. Reporters who sought him out were likely to get a nervous giggle in reply to their questions, and little more.

Even on the night when I routed him out of bed in a Chicago hotel to tell him that it indubitably was true that Roosevelt was going to dump him in favor of Truman, the Vice-President, his nightshirt flapping about his knees, could offer nothing better than "no comment."

But despite what many regarded as personal and political shortcomings, Wallace left some high-water marks on the office of Vice-President. He had served as an executive aide to the President; he operated in a field hitherto untouched by his predecessors, and, when Roosevelt sent him to Asia, he served as the eyes and ears of the President. Furthermore, when he was casually tossed aside by Roosevelt as Vice-President, Wallace had the resilience to take his lumps and come back fighting as Secretary of Commerce.

There would be none of the Wallace benefits for Truman. Roosevelt gave the man who was to succeed him in the presidency nothing but the absent treatment. Truman's stewardship in the second office was to be brief, uneventful, and wholly lacking in preparation for the staggering responsibilities that descended upon him.

When Truman surprised the pollsters, the pundits, and even himself by winning the presidency in his own right in 1948, he carried into office with him one of the most colorful characters who ever was Vice-President.

Alben Barkley, a bulky, jovial, nearsighted old war horse of politics, had more fun out of the second office than any other man

who had held it or is likely to do so. Known affectionately as "the Veep," Barkley was instrumental in advancing the vice-presidency to a position of prominence in the judgment of the American people. He was so human that he once accidentally flipped his ice-cream dessert into his ample lap without noticing it, and his hostess, TV's Martha Rountree, was constrained from mentioning it because she didn't want to interrupt the Kentucky story the Veep was telling.

If the fates had been kinder, Barkley might have been President, to convulse the whole country instead of the few millions who knew him personally. He probably would have been Vice-President in 1944 instead of Truman if he had not permitted his Irish temper to get away with his ambitions on February 23 of that year.

Roosevelt had just vetoed a tax bill which Barkley, as the majority leader of the Senate, had wheedled to passage by persuasion, compromise, and legislative sweat. As was his custom, Roosevelt sent the measure back to Congress with a snarl. He said it was a "tax relief bill providing relief not for the needy but the greedy."

Barkley, who had been a docile disciple of the President, was incensed. On that morning he had dictated to his staff a burning speech urging the Senate to override the veto. Leslie L. Biffle, the secretary of the Senate, who was to figure in several more political decisions affecting Barkley, urged the majority leader not to deliver this particular diatribe against a President who still was riding high in popular esteem. We reporters, standing nearby, could hear Biffle pleading almost tearfully, "Don't make that speech." Barkley wagged his massive head with determination. "I'm going to do it, Les," he said.

The bells rang. The Senate was in session. The chaplain prayed. A few preliminaries were disposed of. Then Barkley rose to deliver in the Senate the most devastating attack a party leader had loosed in this century against his President in the White House.

His voice echoing in the far corners of the galleries, Barkley called the President's veto message "a calculated and deliberate

assault upon the legislative integrity of every member of Congress."

"I do not propose to take this unjustifiable assault lying down," the old Roman thundered.

Turning poignant, the Kentucky senator said he had carried the flag for Roosevelt "with little help here on the Senate floor and more frequently with little help from the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue."

Then the white-faced and perspiring majority leader lunged into the phrases that, more than any other, cost him his best chance for the presidency. The vetoed bill had carried a special tax concession for timberland operators. Roosevelt had criticized this, citing his own experience as a timber man.

"I do not know to what extent the President is engaged in the timber business," Barkley said. "I do know that he sells Christmas trees."

Roosevelt might have forgiven anything else. But this was a personal affront on a sore subject—his failure to attain success in any business venture until he resorted to selling Christmas trees off land he had inherited. If Barkley had not said that, he might have been Roosevelt's choice for the vice-presidency in 1944, as the Kentucky senator logically should have been. But Barkley forgot what he should have remembered—that Roosevelt never forgot—and almost never forgave a personal affront.

Senator Scott Lucas of Illinois, who later claimed the place Barkley held as Democratic leader of the Senate, had another version of Roosevelt's lasting animosity. Lucas thought he might have been the Democratic nominee for Vice-President in 1944, when Truman got the prize, if he had not made a six-minute speech in the House in 1937.

In the midst of the battle over the Supreme Court packing bill, the tall, silver-haired Lucas arose in the House on the day Senator Joe Robinson died to attack the Roosevelt Court proposal. Lucas said the President was "selfish" in persisting in pushing the Court-enlargement plan, inferring that this presidential action had brought about the death of the frustrated and beleaguered Robinson.

"Roosevelt never forgave me for that," Lucas said simply, years later.

To support this contention, Lucas said that Frank Walker, who was managing Truman's bid for the vice-presidential nomination in the 1944 convention, and Harold L. Ickes, who was directing Wallace's bid for renomination, had come to him and had told him separately that if he stayed in the contest, they would be for him if their own candidates couldn't win. But Lucas knew he had no prospects, because Roosevelt had not forgotten his 1937 speech.

Barkley, who had lost the real opportunity to become President in 1944, decided in 1948 that he would rather preside over the Senate than be its majority leader. Truman, who was making what looked at the time like a losing attempt to get elected on his own, had offered second place on the ticket to Justice William O. Douglas of the Supreme Court. A recognized liberal and a westerner, Douglas put off a decision. Finally, after several days, he told Truman apologetically he didn't want to leave the Court.

Such news traveled swiftly to men like Biffle, and the politically acute secretary of the Senate thought immediately of his old friend Barkley. Over a couple of bourbons, laced with branch water, the two decided at a conference in Biffle's impressive Capitol office there was no reason why Barkley should not be the candidate for Vice-President.

Swiveling around in his chair, Biffle picked up the receiver on a direct telephone line to the White House and asked for the President. Truman was on the line in a minute. Switching Barkley in, Biffle asked the President if he had found a vice-presidential candidate. Truman replied that he had not and was open to suggestions.

Biffle signaled Barkley to begin his sales talk. The Kentucky senator took off like a horse breaking from the No. 1 slot in his home state's Derby. The President listened and was impressed.

Biffle chimed in with the prediction that Barkley could be nominated easily at the convention.

"It's all right with me," Truman replied and the deed was practically done.

So Barkley got his vice-presidential nomination in 1948, four years too late to use it as an avenue to the presidency.

Although he was seventy-one when he took office, Barkley had lost none of his zest for life and none of his speaking or politicking ability. Truman respected Barkley, who once had been his boss in the Senate. He listened to Barkley's advice and sometimes followed it. But although he personally felt he could go on forever, Barkley's age made a hollow mockery of his efforts to win the party's presidential nomination in 1952.

It was in that year, however, that a young man who seemed to lead a charmed political life got his biggest political break. After Eisenhower had won the presidential nomination, a score of the faithful gathered in the general's Chicago hotel suite to go over the list of available running mates. The telephone rang and the call was for Senator Frank Carlson of Kansas. When Carlson answered, a familiar voice said:

"Frank, this is Bob Taft. I have a favor to ask of you. I made only one commitment during the convention. I told Ev Dirksen that I would ask that his name be considered for the vice presidential nomination. Will you pass that request on?"

Carlson would and did, even though the name of the Illinois senator, who had assailed Governor Dewey dramatically in the final bitter fight over the presidential nomination, was one of the last that ever would have been given favorable consideration by the men about the presidential nominee.

These men talked long but nothing was settled finally except that a smaller committee headed by Herbert Brownell would pursue the matter further with Eisenhower. Dewey had brought up Nixon's name and it was the one which finally came out of the hat, largely because Eisenhower was attracted by his youth. Nixon then was only thirty-nine years old.

The California senator was taking a snooze in his state delegation's headquarters when he got the news. For once Nixon was not his immaculate self. He always seemed to have a way of coming through the most trying experience with the look of a man who had just combed his hair and had brushed the lint off his carefully tailored suit. But it had been a rough night. Nixon hadn't

shaved and he was too tired to do it before he had some rest. So he piled into bed with his undershirt on.

The telephone rang. It was for Nixon. Brownell was on the line. He explained that he headed a committee of supporters to which the general had given the names of six men he regarded as acceptable for the vice-presidential nomination.

"The committee has met and agreed unanimously on you," Brownell told the unbelieving Nixon. "General Eisenhower wants to see you."

When Nixon presented himself, freshly shaved, the presidential nominee outlined to the enthralled younger man the concept of a deputy President who would be analogous to a deputy military commander. In the absence of the chief, the Vice-President would preside over Cabinet meetings and sessions of the National Security Council. The second man not only would be the chief executive's stand-in at home but would represent him on trips the President could not leave the country to make.

Thus the vice-presidency—which once had been the repository for party hacks and disappointed presidential aspirants—was spread before Nixon as a challenge for individual achievement that might prepare him to climb the ladder to the highest office. And Nixon set quickly about the job of climbing.

## 26 The Man for the Job?



The Burmese crowd was silent, but restive and hostile. At strategic points young men held aloft crudely lettered banners spelling out, "Yankee warmonger." Nearby, a ramshackle sound truck blared anti-American sentiments.

Down the dusty road a convoy approached. Two trucks filled with rough-faced youths in uniform paced a small parade of cars rolling cautiously toward the people of Pegu.

The assembled people were not many. They were taciturn, a little haughty, a little afraid, perhaps. They rallied around men in whom they had not much confidence. These men had told them that today a representative of the imperialists was coming.

These men—Communists they were called—had explained painstakingly that those who assembled to watch would see a great and ostentatious man who wore the skirts of the fabulously wealthy capitalists. Such men, the Communists said, stood on the necks of the poor and the oppressed.

Ostentatious. That was a word beyond the limited English vocabulary of those who had gathered at the crossroads. But, ah, yes, they knew what it meant when it was told to them in their native tongue. *Htin paw aung pya thaw*. Ah, yes, they who were chewing their betel nuts could be as ostentatious as he.

So they had turned out, the old and the young of Pegu. They came more from curiosity than resentment or anger, they had to admit to themselves. If there was resentment, it was not so much directed at the visitor as at a fate which had cast them, in the world's eyes, as underprivileged. For no man can abide being regarded by another as underprivileged, even if he so regards himself.

The convoy drew abreast of the crowd. A youngish-looking, black-haired, square-jawed man with a cartoonist's delight of a tipped-up nose leaned forward from the back seat of one of the

cars and tapped the driver on the shoulder. He spoke a few words and the convoy screeched to a stop.

The man stepped out, held out his hand, and a pretty blonde-haired young woman in white joined him. Burmese officials, buzzing with conversation, swarmed quickly from the other cars and milled around the couple. There was a brief huddle. Then, with a toss of his head, the Vice-President of the United States grasped his wife's hand and strode resolutely toward the crowd, which stood silently despite the din of the overage sound truck.

Caught unawares, a little embarrassed, the members of the crowd parted, made way for the handsome couple. Capitalists never acted this way, the citizens of Pegu seemed to say to themselves. Hadn't they been assured that the convoy would whiz by, hardly slowing? What manner of man, and woman, was this? Draw a little closer and let us see.

Vice-President Nixon broke out a cheery smile. He held out his hand to an oldster. His "hello" was warm and friendly. Mrs. Nixon was smiling, too. The oldster let a return grin break across his missing front teeth. Proudly his "hello" came back in understandable English.

The tension broke. Suddenly, all around were pressing a little closer, hands outstretched, timid smiles on their faces. This Yankee was friendly. He put on no airs. He was not ostentatious. He acted like a common man among common men. And his wife, too, was no aristocrat who looked at them with disdain. Her smile seemed genuine.

An excited babble broke out as members of the crowd jostled the downcast sign bearers in an effort to get closer to this couple who had, by the simple act of coming among them in a friendly way, turned animosity into good will.

On that November day in 1955, in faraway Burma, Richard Nixon showed himself to be a knowledgeable and expert salesman of the good will the United States so notably had failed to peddle in the undecided markets of the world. But Nixon was to learn that because the United States means well, it does not necessarily follow that it does well.

Two and a half years later on an autumnal day in May at

Caracas, Venezuela, a howling mob, tossing rocks, eggs, and garbage, closed in on him, beat at his car with clubs, spat in his face, and let spittle fly at Mrs. Nixon who rode in the car behind. In this violent climax to an eight-country tour of South America, Nixon emerged calm and restrained, a fit candidate for the plaudits of admirers at home.

The Communists had been well organized this time. This was no local demonstration whipped up hastily among the ill-informed people of Pegu. This was for keeps. The Communist incitement to riot fell on willing ears in an area of the world undergoing economic upheaval and quite willing to blame its troubles on the colossus of the North. There was no opportunity here for the broad smile, the handshake, the exchange of amenities, and the wreath laying that had been calculated to produce reciprocal friendship.

But between the success in Pegu and the unfortunate outcome in Caracas, a pattern had been woven by the bold, calculating, ambitious young man who wanted to be President and thought he knew how to go about getting the prize. For the Nixon of the good-will tours was a Vice-President with his eye on the presidency.

Assembling an impressive list of contacts with free-world leaders—even debating with some of the neutralists, as he did with India's Nehru—gave Nixon a depth of perspective in the field of foreign affairs where his experience had been limited. Also, there was always the opportunity on these visits to identify himself with ethnic groups whose votes could be important at home. And if the Latin-American venture was less than successful, its explosiveness of action had crowded off the front pages at home the revolt in Algeria and ominous disturbances in the Middle East.

This, then, was an integral part of a program designed to "mature" a young man who had climbed into politics over the prostrate forms of Democratic opponents, bowled over by insinuations that they were soft on communism. For Nixon had seized that issue long before it was made a household word by his friend, Senator Joseph R. McCarthy of Wisconsin.

Perhaps no man ever traveled so fast in politics with one dominant issue as Nixon did with his well-advertised fight on subversion and the reputed infiltration of Communists into government

positions. Nixon epitomized his own viewpoint in those days when he said:

"Anyone who thinks communism in this country is just an idea is crazy as hell!"

Nixon made this issue the impelling theme of campaigns that won him a seat in the House of Representatives, the Senate, and finally resulted in his choice as a vice-presidential candidate. In an era of near-hysteria over subversion, Nixon played the anti-left wing, anti-Communist horn a little louder than his fellows. But he was never out of harmony with his band, as was McCarthy. Nixon could mute his trumpet if the political score seemed to demand it. But mostly his was a noisy contribution to the brass section in one campaign after another.

Nixon had sniffed the postwar air expertly. Russia, the great ally, was on her way to becoming Russia, the great threat. There was growing uneasiness about infiltration and subversion. The parlor pinks who had been lionized during the war were running into hostile audiences. Communism might be mining the cellar, now that it no longer could ring the doorbell and be welcomed into the living room as a slightly daffy, but harmless, cousin.

President Eisenhower had told the 1952 Republican convention that Nixon was "a man who has shown statesmanlike qualities in many ways, but he has a special talent and ability to ferret out any kind of subversive influence wherever it may be found, and the strength and persistence to get rid of it."

Democratic critics contended that Nixon was just as adept at ferreting out Communist connections they insisted did not exist at all. They accused him of adopting such tactics against Jerry Voorhis, a one-time socialist and a New Deal left-winger who had spent ten years in Congress.

At the outset, the Nixon race against Voorhis looked hopeless. It was here that Nixon first demonstrated a characteristic that would remain with him throughout life. The young man with no assured future was willing to "go for broke," as he himself put it, against Voorhis. Throughout his spectacular rise in the nation's political stream, Nixon would never hesitate to play a long shot. He was, as he reminded us reporters often, a fatalist about politics.

The man who was on the scene at the right time and who pleased the voters with the words they wanted to hear would win. If this might be regarded as cold-blooded, then the young navy veteran from Whittier, California, who took on Voorhis was realistic about his chances, as he always was to remain.

With a dearth of Republican candidates, a home-town committee picked Nixon for a race that almost no other Republican wanted to undertake. Nixon thought he knew how to uproot Voorhis. It was time to cash in on the Communist issue and Voorhis was vulnerable in the sense that he was recognized as a left-winger. It was Nixon's theory in these days that there would be time later for statesmanlike utterances, after an opponent had been quartered on the field of battle. The most important matter was to get elected, even if one got a little grimy doing it.

His enemies were to contend later that Nixon had, as Rufus Choate said of John Quincy Adams, "an instinct for the jugular" in any political battle. This was not necessarily a wholly evil thing, although its application was seldom pretty. Among others Andrew Jackson, Franklin Roosevelt, and, to an extent, Harry Truman had it. When men fight, the one who fights hardest usually wins. If some foul blows are struck, history could not say that all of its great men aimed all their swings above their opponent's belt.

In his contest with Voorhis, Nixon talked about "the people who front for un-American elements, wittingly or otherwise. . . ." His campaign literature equated Voorhis with the regional Political Action Committee (PAC) of the CIO, which had fallen under Communist influence. But because Voorhis had been anti-Communist, the PAC did not endorse him. Nixon's pamphlets proclaimed, however, that "a vote for Nixon is a vote against PAC [and] its communist principles."

Residents of the district, lifting their telephones, heard this message: "This is a friend of yours. I can't tell you my name, but I want you to know that Jerry Voorhis is a communist." Years later Nixon was to describe Voorhis as "a man with very high ideals," but one of those "who never accomplishes anything much."

By the time he ran against Mrs. Helen Gahagan Douglas for the Senate in 1950, Nixon had been catapulted into national

prominence by the Hiss case, in which the California congressman had provided the spark that led to Hiss's downfall. Nixon's managers broadcast a "pink sheet" in which they said that since January 1, 1945, Mrs. Douglas had voted in the House 354 times the same way that Representative Vito Marcantonio had cast his ballot. Marcantonio was the spokesman for the pro-Communist American Labor party of New York.

Included in the list of votes were many measures that Presidents Roosevelt and Truman had recommended, as well as many supported by a majority of the House. Mrs. Douglas was open to the charge that she was a liberal. But even her worst critics had not called her a Communist. Neither did Nixon, but the voters got the inference.

Nixon's election to the Senate provided him with the political stature that gave him a place on the list of a half dozen acceptable vice-presidential nominees when Eisenhower won the presidential nomination prize in 1952. The fact that Governor Dewey wagered the author several months previously that Nixon would get second place on the ticket indicated the choice of the Californian was not as haphazard as it might have appeared.

Actually, Nixon had met Eisenhower only twice before this day. But the California senator had such an acute ability to sense the political direction in which the Republicans and the country were headed that he had turned Senator Taft down cold when the latter called personally before the convention opened to solicit Nixon's support for Taft's bid for the nomination.

When Eisenhower and Nixon met, they hit it off well together. Eisenhower was pleased at the prospect of having a young, vigorous campaigner on the ticket with him. If he knew little about the campaign tactics his running mate had used in the past, there never was any indication that the President objected to the slashing attacks Nixon made on the opposition. Quite the contrary, Eisenhower was quick and effusive in his praise of Nixon's work in each of the campaigns that followed.

When he had been freed of the worry that he would be dumped from the ticket after the expense-fund exposé, Nixon took the offensive in full force. He battered at the Democrats on the

theme they were soft on communism. He said Truman's administration hid "Communist skeletons in its political closet," capping this in Pittsburgh on October 8 with the question:

"What is more natural than the Communist desire to keep in power an administration that permitted them to steal our bomb secrets, crack our diplomatic codes, and honeycomb our agencies with treachery?"

In Ohio the same day, Nixon said Truman had threatened to fire any FBI agent who co-operated with the House Un-American Activities Committee in the Hiss case. In Erie, Pennsylvania, on October 10, he talked of "a sleeper apparatus in the State Department at this time . . . ready to go when the Communists order it into action."

This was McCarthyism in its virulent form, two years before McCarthy himself was to stump the country blasting at "twenty years of treason" under Truman and Roosevelt.

Nixon did not spend all of his time on the Communist issue. He also tried his best to wrap the Democrats up in a "war party" label. He contended the Truman administration had depended on the war for "prosperity" that rests on the tired, bloody backs of 100,000 American boys crouching in the foxholes of Korea."

There was no doubt that Nixon was resourceful in his campaigning. Neither was there any doubt that he was about the most controversial of the Vice-Presidents in that period. As an example, Whittier College, where he had received his bachelor's degree, gave him an honorary doctor of laws degree in April 1954. A month earlier the faculty of Duke University, where he had received his law degree, voted 61 to 42 against conferring an honorary degree upon him.

If the Democrats thought they had been maligned in 1952, they learned in 1954's congressional campaign that Nixon had been only warming up two years earlier.

Eisenhower had told us at a news conference on November 18, 1953, he hoped the Communists-in-government controversy would not be exploited in the forthcoming campaign. But Nixon was convinced he knew more about how to win than Eisenhower

did. Instead of muting the issue, he blew his campaign trumpet at full crescendo.

Taking a new tack, Nixon flew about the country saying that the Eisenhower administration was "kicking the Communists and fellow-travelers and security risks out of the government, not by the hundreds but by the thousands." The number of security risks naturally was a matter of dispute, but Stephen Mitchell, then the Democratic National Chairman, seemed to be sticking closer to the facts when he said Nixon's claim was like that of a police chief who boasted that he had "captured thousands of murderers, kidnapers, and parking violators, when his records showed he had one suspected murderer, one suspected kidnaper, and 2000 parking violators."

Undaunted, Nixon barnstormed all the harder. He said in Butte, Montana, October 24, that "the Communist party is determined to conduct its program within the Democratic party." In Rock Island, Illinois, he asserted the Truman administration "deliberately refused to heed the warnings of the FBI and in instance after instance promoted rather than fired individuals whose FBI reports indicated participation in Communist activities."

The basis for this charge appeared to have been the case of Harry Dexter White, a Treasury official who was given a promotion after the White House had been furnished with an FBI report that pointed to him as a member of a Communist espionage ring. Truman had difficulties in several attempts to explain the White case.

This was the genesis of Truman's charge that the Vice-President had called him a "traitor." Truman said that "to be called a traitor by the Vice President of the United States is hard to take." He added if he and Nixon ever met it would "start a fight."

Both avoided such a meeting, although Nixon made a tentative effort for a rapprochement in 1958 with an offer to play a piano duet with Truman if the National Press Club would sponsor the event. Truman would have none of it and, as late as 1959, passed up an invitation to a White House dinner for Winston Churchill partly because Nixon would be on hand.

Truman already had indicated his distaste for Nixon was a lasting thing when he rejected a bid of the Gridiron Club in Washington to attend a dinner honoring Nixon and former Vice-Presidents after the 1956 election.

"I won't sit down at the same table with him, or his boss [Eisenhower] either," the man from Missouri wrote.

Although Adlai E. Stevenson called Nixon "a poisoner of campaigns," Eisenhower took a detached view of the Vice-President's tactics. He said in response to press-conference questions he was loathe to believe Nixon had been guilty of any indiscretion. Instead, he praised Nixon for a "tremendous job" of campaigning.

House Speaker Sam Rayburn, who had seen a lot of campaigning, said later that Nixon had been "cruel" and "I don't like cruel people." But Rayburn conceded that as time progressed, Nixon had matured and there was hope that he would not resume the criticized tactics.

In time Nixon himself looked back on his earlier efforts with some regret. He was widely quoted as having told a visiting British editor, who asked how he could have conducted the kind of campaign he did against Mrs. Douglas, that he was very young and very ambitious at the time and now was sorry for what he had done.

So the Nixon who campaigned in 1956 and 1958 was a changed individual. He could say then that neither party had a monopoly on honesty or in wanting to do what was best for the American people. Astonishingly, he who had climbed the political ladder principally on that issue could tell a Los Angeles crowd blandly on September 6, 1956, that "the entire problem of communism, foreign and domestic, is too important for partisan criticism or political sniping."

These elevated campaign tactics coincided with the emergence of the "new" Nixon who was bearing to the left away from the conservative Republicans and who no longer was under the necessity of bridging the gap between the McCarthys and the Eisenhowers of the party.

Nixon's record as a member of the House had been conservative on domestic issues. He had called in the 1952 campaigning for the

re-election of "my good friend, Joe McCarthy." He had urged a crowd in Indianapolis, Indiana, to "send Bill Jenner back to the Senate." But by 1956 the Vice-President had concluded that if he continued to link himself with the reactionary right wing of the Republican party he would isolate himself from the independent voters whose support he must have if he were ever to be elected President. In addition, it was his judgment that the Communist issue had worn itself out—the public was interested in other matters and no longer enthralled by the avenging investigator.

So there began a calculated move to the left, a contrived effort to take on the appearance of a statesman and not merely a political hatchet man. It must be understood that, in a way, almost everything Nixon did was calculated, reasoned out well in advance, and carried out with the best technical perfection he could summon.

Even on the day in Lima, Peru, when he saw a mob assembled at the university he was invited to visit, Nixon had worked out an advance plan. Nothing was left to emotional chance. He made the cool decision to step out of his car and walk into the throng. By no mere accident he kept calling, "Where is your leader?" in an effort to throw the Communist inciters off balance. But when this failed he decided—and this was not an emotional but a calculated thing—that he would display his temper and shout "cowards" at those who were taunting him. This, he had reasoned, might turn the tide. But it didn't.

Always, under every circumstance, there was the feeling that Nixon was carrying out a preconceived plan—that a mental blueprint was being followed with exquisite technique. Here was a diffident man to whom the natural camaraderie of the politician was foreign. There was in him none of the robust heartiness, none of the exuberant carelessness of detail, nor the likeableness of a Truman. Nixon was bold, shrewd, smooth, and effective—but it showed on him. He could have admiration and respect but not adulation. He was like a man who had learned by diligent practice to hit all the right notes in playing the piano but still was not an inspired musician.

Unlike the warm, gregarious Rockefeller, who never seemed to

meet a stranger, Nixon slapped no backs. Nor did the Vice-President feel he could afford the luxury of intimate companionships. He was genial, pleasant, but reserved. Moreover, he knew he was that way and made no mistaken effort to change himself. After all, Eisenhower was, in a manner of speaking, the same kind of what Nixon called a "political animal."

This is not to say that the Vice-President lacked sensitivity. He matched the average man in his high and his low moods. Often he felt frustrated. Sometimes he came to believe the game was not worth the effort.

He reached one of those low plateaus on a February day in 1956 when Eisenhower called him in and suggested that no Vice-President since Van Buren had succeeded a living President. It might be better for his political future, the President said in a fatherly way, if Nixon would take a Cabinet post which would give him some executive experience.

Nixon recognized this for what it was—a presidential attempt, obviously inspired by some of the party's liberals, to move the controversial Vice-President out of the line of fire in the second-term effort. Nixon knew that a Cabinet job offered him only a side street to oblivion and he wanted none of it. He felt the President was sincerely, but mistakenly, trying to do him a good turn. He held no rancor toward Eisenhower, but the situation was such that he could make no move to save himself at the moment.

It was not until Eisenhower told us at a subsequent news conference Nixon could "chart his own course" that the Vice-President felt there was any opening to declare himself for re-election. He seized it quickly, announcing after another conference with Eisenhower that he was running again.

The abortive attempt of Harold Stassen to scratch Nixon's name from the ticket—which had the undercover backing of Adams and some of the New York financial contributors—reacted to Nixon's benefit by silencing the grumbling among the party's conservatives that he was wandering away from them. The breadth of his strength was illustrated when 190 of 202 Republican members of the House pledged support for his renomination.

Once he was re-elected, Nixon really got down to work on the

project of transforming his political image from that of a tough, slugging politician into that of a mature, well-rounded, responsible statesman. Nixon sensed it was a necessity that this change be made, since he felt that no man whose public career had been built on his divisive abilities could summon the widespread support that elects Presidents.

Nixon himself set the keynote for this campaign when he called in reporters on the day of his second inauguration to notify the people generally that the age of the Vice-President's maturity had arrived. As he lounged at ease on the divan of his then middle-class home, Nixon was a study in competent confidence. He had traveled a long way in four years. Part of the road had been rocky. But he had learned, broadened; in his own mind he was ready for the supreme responsibility. Much of that crept into his voice as he described the green young man of four years ago who hadn't the "slightest idea" of what his job entailed except for the ceremonial and constitutional duties traditional to his office.

"Now," he said, "through these four years have evolved rather definite lines of responsibility. So I approach the next four years with some rather definite responsibilities [not limited to] acting as a figurehead in presiding over the Senate."

The man who sat before us indeed had assumed larger burdens. He was, by law, a member of the National Security Council, where the country's policies of peace and war were fashioned. By invitation of the President, he was a regular attendant at Cabinet meetings and had presided both over them and Security Council sessions. Also by invitation of the President, he sat in with Republican congressional leaders in their weekly meetings with the chief executive on legislative matters.

Nixon was the recipient of regular briefings from the Pentagon on military affairs. Secretary of State Dulles, and subsequently Secretary Herter, kept him informed of diplomatic developments. With all of the high officials of the administration he was on intimate terms and knew most of their major problems. In practical fact he was in a position not only to know almost everything going on within the government but to exert influence in the shaping of many major policies.

The sharp contrast with other Vice-Presidents was illustrated by the fact that in the eighty-two days he served in the office, Truman never had crossed the White House threshold as the No. 2 man in the government until he went there to learn of Roosevelt's death.

To Eisenhower broad utilization of the vice-presidency was an essential and an impersonal thing. The President told us at a February 6, 1957, news conference he would be showing indifference to the welfare of the American people unless he kept the Vice-President informed of everything that was happening.

"Even if Mr. Nixon and I were not good friends, I would still have him in every important conference of government, so that if the grim reaper should find it time to . . . remove me from this scene, he [Nixon] is ready to step in without any interruption. . . ." Eisenhower said.

The President often described Nixon as the best-qualified Vice-President in the nation's history. At a Gettysburg rally in 1956 he told members of the Republican National Committee as they munched hot dogs under a circus tent in a farm field:

"There is no man in the history of America who has had such a careful preparation as has Vice-President Nixon for carrying out the duties of the presidency, if that duty should ever fall upon him."

The sad fact, however, was that Nixon had had no administrative experience and Eisenhower resisted giving it to him. As we have seen, he would not appoint Nixon to head the Operations Coordinating Board. He did name the Vice-President as chairman of the President's Committee on Government Contracts and as head of a Cabinet anti-inflation group. But these were advisory posts; they offered the Vice-President no chance to make the kind of decisions that were required to operate a government agency; they gave him no training for the job of directing all government agencies.

Eisenhower also turned thumbs down on a proposal that Nixon head up the government's psychological-warfare efforts to counter increasingly successful Soviet propaganda.

In response to press-conference questions, Eisenhower told us

that it would be impractical to give the Vice-President specified duties in the executive department "because if you happen to have a Vice-President that disagrees with you, then you have . . . an impossible situation."

"I don't know any Vice-President who has ever been given the opportunities to participate in difficult decisions, conferences, and every kind of informative meeting that we have given Mr. Nixon," he said. "But I decided as a matter of good governmental organization that it would not be correct to give him a governmental position in the executive department."

If Nixon was more than ordinarily irked at this decision, he put a good face on the matter. In quiet background conferences with a few selected reporters, he made the point often that he was a good soldier who felt that the time to argue was before the decision was made. Once the commander had spoken, it remained for him to obey.

It was Nixon's repeated thesis that only the President could make final determinations. As Vice-President he participated in the discussion of the policies about to be cemented and in this period he was free to express publicly his viewpoint. But once the decision was made, he said, "That becomes my position—that is the administration line and I operate within its broad general context."

In the meantime, Nixon was busy building the image of the well-rounded statesman. Between conferences with administration officials and members of Congress, he could find time to talk with visiting and resident diplomats, correspondents, and editors. The Russian ambassador, leaving for home at the end of his tour of duty, paid a farewell call on the Vice-President. Deputy Soviet Premier Anastas Mikoyan made certain that he saw Nixon before he concluded his visit to the United States.

His visit to Russia and Poland—particularly his kitchen debate with Khrushchev at the American fair—shot Nixon's popularity up to the point where, for the first time, he led prominent Democratic presidential aspirants in the public political polls.

At the same time, Nixon patrolled his domestic political fences. He managed quite adroitly to bring in Negro editors, reporters,

and officials with whom he had come in contact on his good-will tour of Africa as the first social guests who visited his new \$70,000 Washington home—the furnishings of which were set off with lavish presents given him by heads of state on his Asiatic tour.

Teaming with Senator William Knowland of California, then the Senate's Republican leader, Nixon made it possible by his rulings as the Senate's presiding officer to get a civil-rights bill before that body and to help win eventual passage of a measure to enforce the voting rights of Negroes in the South.

In his role of administration supporter, Nixon stood fast on the firing line when many about him in Congress were assailing Eisenhower's seventy-seven billion-dollar budget in 1959. He fought for sufficient foreign-aid funds, extension of the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act, Defense Department reorganization, and the beleaguered school-aid bill which Eisenhower himself left stranded in controversy.

But gradually as the second term wore on, a metamorphosis set in. Eisenhower's popularity was not quite as high and his programs were encountering stiff opposition. The position of an ambitious Vice-President tied irrevocably to a retiring administration became not quite so tenable. It was natural for Nixon to begin to think that he must establish an independent position for himself, if that were possible without repudiating any of the major decisions on which he must stand in any bid for the presidency. At times also, he was alarmed at administration inaction in the face of rapidly marching events.

It was obvious that, on domestic matters, Nixon would react much more swiftly than Eisenhower. Where the President was content to stand pat and wait a problem out, Nixon was all for jumping in with a solution. In that respect, the Vice-President was something like Franklin Roosevelt. Roosevelt never sat still; he tried something and if it didn't work, he tried something else.

In his first forays toward a measure of independence, Nixon proceeded cautiously within the walled secrecy of the inner administration councils. In this transition state he opposed deep defense-spending cuts dictated by the budget-balancing phobia that remained as Humphrey's chief legacy to the administration.

The Vice-President lost this fight but the Russian sputniks soon gave him another opportunity. While Secretary of Defense Wilson made light of the Russians' scientific advancement and Sherman Adams said the United States was not going to join in any outer-space basketball game, Nixon tried to awaken the country and the administration to the threat spelled out by Soviet man-made moons.

When the economic recession hit in full force early in 1958, President Eisenhower adopted a wait-and-see attitude despite a drumfire of Democratic demands in Congress for large-scale spending to offset unemployment. Nixon was uneasy, restive, certain in his own mind that not enough was being done to counter the threat of the kind of depression that had sunk the Hoover administration.

Nixon had laid down at the Republican national convention in 1956 what he regarded as the chief threats to the GOP administration's continuation in power.

"There are only three sure-fire issues against an administration in power—failures in foreign policy leading to war; failures in domestic policy leading to depression; failures in administration leading to corruption," he said.

Nixon was concerned with only the second of this list on the day he called correspondents into his crowded office on the third floor of the Senate Office Building in the spring of 1958. This was no background conference in which he would assume no responsibility for the news which went out from it. We reporters were at liberty to quote him directly on his views, he informed us.

We knew the man who sat across the desk from us as a political tactician, skilled in feeling the popular pulse beat, whose every apparent spontaneity was prepackaged, who might make mistakes but would not blunder into them. This, then, was obviously an occasion of unusual significance.

Nixon proceeded calmly to announce that if the economic horizons did not brighten measurably within the next few weeks, he favored a substantial, across-the-board tax reduction. Cutting taxes, rather than increasing government spending, was the Republican way to ward off a depression, he said.

The Vice-President had miscalculated the strength of Secretary of the Treasury Anderson, however. As we have already noted, Anderson won Eisenhower to his side and stopped the proposed tax reduction before Nixon could get it off the ground.

When business took an upturn in the fall, Nixon knocked on the door of the presidential nomination again with a proposal for cutting taxes in the face of an expected twelve billion-dollar deficit in government revenues. His argument was that reductions in the higher brackets (from which, incidentally, came the heavy campaign contributions) and in excise levies would increase, rather than diminish, government income by spurring business and industrial activity.

Organized labor didn't care much for this proposal. Its leaders said it represented a form of the "trickle down" theory which they contended the Republicans had held traditionally. This was a disappointment to Nixon, who definitely did not want an "anti-labor" label put on his party and who told other Republicans time and time again it would be a mistake to permit themselves to be cast as the party of big business.

Nixon called himself a "moderate conservative" on domestic issues. He held that it would be "a great tragedy if the legacy of this generation . . . was that we reduced the role of individuals in our society at the expense of increasing the role of government."

It was his contention that while government must provide a floor under security, it must not put any ceiling over opportunity. The best way to do this, he said, was to fulfill what he conceived to be the government's responsibility to stimulate the growth of the economy.

While he was resigned to being regarded as a conservative on the domestic front, Nixon made it clear at all times that he was "an internationalist and a liberal" in foreign affairs. He said the Republican party must "take a strong, affirmative position" in this field and not rely on the maintenance of the status quo by mere military strength alone.

Whether it was calculated or not, this position put Nixon in tune with the divergent elements of his party. The conservatives liked his stand at home and the liberals his position on world af-

fairs. And Nixon knew he must somehow hold on to the conservatives to win his party's presidential nomination and must have sufficient appeal to the liberals to get elected.

By his own definition, the Vice-President was a greater "chance taker" in international diplomacy than Eisenhower had proved to be. He reminded interviewers that the Quakers, of whom he was one, "have a passion for peace." The inference was that he would take some long chances to gain peace.

There was no doubt that Nixon was preparing himself in every possible way to become a "strong" President if he ever filled the office. Describing future chief executives one time, he said that "they're going to have to be leaders and men who can make the right decisions in times of crisis and, in addition, win the support of the people for those decisions, which might otherwise be unpopular."

Nixon had worked hard to perfect the image of himself as an intelligent, politically acute, well-trained individual who was ready for greater responsibilities. He had worked hard to erase the earlier picture his critics had drawn of him as an expedient ham actor who campaigned ruthlessly and was an ambition-consumed politician with less conscience than cunning.

Instead, he hoped to be accepted as a youthful and vigorous statesman of unquestioned integrity who was intensely loyal to his party and his country and, above all, well grounded in the domestic and foreign problems that might beset the nation.

Whether Nixon thus could fashion the key that would unlock the elective door of the presidency that had barred Vice-Presidents since Van Buren's time remained to be determined by the events ahead.

## 27 The Splendid Misery



A ghostly light burns all night on the White House portico facing Pennsylvania Avenue, a lonely symbol of the never-ceasing demands of the presidency as an institution of government and an instrument of the humanities.

For the man who sleeps, perhaps fitfully, in the chief executive's second-floor bedroom there are no eight-hour days, no surcease from responsibility, no carefree moments in which he can lay down even temporarily the burden he must bear. While he might delegate some of his authority to others, in the end the President stands alone at the summit of decision.

Because the political leader of the nation must shoulder not only the problems of the United States but those of a world poised perilously near the brink of self-destruction while it reaches probably for the stars, his office is, as Thomas Jefferson wrote, "but a splendid misery."

There are some who contend the presidency is not geared for the challenges of the future—that the office of chief magistrate conceived by the Founding Fathers has burgeoned into a job impossible for one man to fill even adequately. Perhaps this is true, but men will continue to struggle for the honor of occupying it and many will fill it to the satisfaction of a majority of their countrymen.

The presidency of the '60s, the '70s, and beyond will be even more exacting in its requirements than in the turbulent '50s. The march into the full development of the nuclear age will demand vigorous, enlightened, patient, and persevering leadership.

The men who fill the office will need to be fired with enthusiasm, be undeterred by carping criticism, be sensitive to change, be adept at molding public opinion, be willing to experiment, be able to compromise. If they are to win the international struggle with atheistic communism and resolve the problem of racial dis-

crimination at home, they must provide the world with moral leadership and personify the American dream of freedom and equality for all.

At the same time, as the primary power in government, the President must remain responsive to every facet of American life. As Harry Truman wrote, "Every hope and every fear of his fellow citizens, almost every aspect of their welfare and activity, fall within the scope of his concern—indeed they fall within the scope of his duty!"

We the people have come to demand of our Presidents performance far beyond the limited actions specified for him in the Constitution, with its primary admonition that the chief executive shall "take care that the laws be faithfully enforced."

Under the Constitution the President is given the power to make treaties, with the advice and consent of the Senate; to appoint officers; to receive ambassadors; to be commander-in-chief of the armed forces; to grant pardons; to give Congress information on the state of the union, to summon it into extra session, to recommend to it measures for its consideration, and to exercise a qualified veto on the legislation it passes.

But these specifics represent only the minimum of authority and responsibility that any President must exercise. On top of these assignments, Congress has piled a pyramid of authority that makes the American executive's the most powerful office of its kind in the world.

Many things only the President can do. He and he alone can determine when and where nuclear weapons shall be used. He is empowered, on his own decision, to order military action to counter Communist aggression in the Middle East. By himself he may decide whether to defend the offshore islands between the mainland of China and Formosa. These are only a few examples of the world-shaking decisions that are his.

Throughout the years a Congress always anxious to pass the buck has enacted legislation requiring the President's direct supervision of sixty-five agencies. Even an hour spent weekly on each of these would leave the chief executive scant time to attend to any of his more important chores.

Beyond this, Congress has made it necessary for the chief executive to co-ordinate the activities of 1900 sprawling federal agencies. If you wonder why the government's right hand never knows what its left is doing and why the President at times may seem confused and befuddled by what one of his administration's bureaucrats has done, consider the task any individual faces in attempting to enforce even a fundamental policy theme in this labyrinth.

Congress also has been adept at adding the implausible to the impossible. Among other silly actions which the lawmakers seem to take blithely, they have directed the President to oversee the preparation of certificates for the graduates of the Capitol Page School and to determine the quality of food that goes into army rations and what time of day they shall be served. Just to even things out among the services, the legislators also specified that the President must decide where the navy band shall play when it goes on tour.

These represent only minor transgressions on the President's time and energy. Congress continues to load him down each year with an average of 500 bills for the relief of private citizens. Most of these involve immigration matters and small claims, but each measure requires nearly as much study by the executive staff as does a major piece of legislation. Such picayune bills represent, on the average, sixty-five per cent of the legislative production of Congress.

This inexcusable drain on the President and his staff could be obliterated if Congress channeled these bills into the courts for a final decision there. If they chose to do so, the legislators also could lift from the President's shoulders the responsibility for appointing thousands of persons he never heard of before as postmasters. It could relieve him of the time-consuming necessity of approving officially the promotions of additional thousands of military and foreign-service officers in the lower ranks.

Congress did enact in 1950 legislation to relieve the President of some of the routine pressed upon him. It passed a law that authorized him to delegate statutory functions to any executive officer whose appointment had been confirmed by the Senate. But

even in this case the lawmakers specifically prohibited the transfer of some powers and made the President responsible—as he always must be—for all of his subordinates' decisions.

But it is not so much the burdens imposed upon him by the Constitution and Congress that weighs the President down as it is the unwritten demands that he be the leader and father-confessor of nearly everything that transpires in American life.

There is in the Constitution and the laws, for instance, no directive that the chief executive act as the principal caretaker of every citizen's paycheck and every business firm's profits. But that is a role he must fill, for the President's attitudes and his statements sustain or depress business and his decisions affect every sensitive pocketbook. Among other things, his budget blueprints a national economy in which a single agency of the government, the air force, operates as a bigger purchaser of the nation's goods than any private organization.

Just how pre-eminent the President is in this field was aptly illustrated when the stock market shook itself out to the tune of a five billion-dollar loss in values on the news of Eisenhower's 1954 heart attack.

So it is that the presidential authority and influence knows no bounds. Main Street is as conscious as Wall Street of his every action, his every decision, and his every mood. Even the inflection of his voice when he makes some official pronouncement becomes a matter for consideration and conjecture.

How then can a man on whom so many depend for so much organize his fleeting hours to the maximum advantage of his country? He can permit no other to sign his name to a document. He can allow no subordinate to make any final decision that affects the lives of 175 million Americans. The answer is that he needs the help, not of some deputy or supernumerary, but of all of the people.

If the people could bring themselves to realize that they had hired a man to do their thinking for them and that they must give him time to think, they would abandon the foolish notion that the President is a prize attraction calculated to empty the cocktail bars of delegates at any convention.

Naturally it is regarded by the leaders of the lodge as imperative that the President address the Royal Order of the Left-handed Sons of the Mystic Yak-Yak. Because their advisers fail to point out that most of the Left-handed Sons will be playing golf or storing the boat for the winter on Election Day, most Presidents yield to what they regard as the political necessities of the hour.

The same procedure holds true when the Daughters of the American Forgotten Men convene in Washington. They must not only have the President for a luncheon speaker, they must visit the White House and be shown around the grounds. The President must pin an orchid on the DAFM's queen for a day—after he has bought some Scout Girls' cookies and has received the triumphant winner of the World's Backward Spelling Contest. This is not to say that any of these activities is unworthy nor is it to contend that all ceremonial duties should be eliminated from the chief executive's schedule.

But let's permit the President to have a long vacation from these inconsequential performances. Let's save his ceremonial appearances for the visits of heads of state and bona fide U.S. heroes. Let it be a rare performer—say the man who hits sixty-one home runs in a major-league season—who gets attention at the White House.

We nearly always have around a Vice-President who wouldn't mind addressing the Left-handed Sons, taking care of the dear DAFM ladies, testing the Scout Girls' cookies, and pinning a plastic medal on the world's best backward speller. Vice-Presidents like to get around among such people, who might even vote for them for higher office.

Seriously, however, not even the Vice-President has much time for this folderol. Between trips to Moscow and other faraway places in the world, the second man must concentrate on learning as much as he can about how to take over the No. 1 place in the government if he is called to higher duties. Despite this widespread activity, suggestions that the Vice-President might assume some of the President's administrative duties fall of their own weight. There cannot be two chief executives in government. While he might serve with the Cabinet, the security council, and

head up various committees, there is not much executive aid the second man can give the President.

To the men he has appointed and can fire at will—but not to the other man elected by all of the people—the President can delegate authority. With his appointees, he can enforce the rule that he is kept abreast of what they are doing and that he retains a veto on any decision they make. With another elected officer he might not always be able to do this.

If the President must worry along without sufficient help in his administrative duties, he at least can have assistance in carrying out his intellectual stewardship. Naturally the security council advises him on defense matters. The Cabinet deals with specific and departmentalized problems. Various committees can keep him informed on educational, scientific, and other advances. But nowhere is there a body charged not only with co-ordinating all the myriad problems of national life but with peering into the future of America.

The presidency of the future must tap the wellsprings of American intuition, energy, and foresight. It must plumb the morality, vision, and strength of those who people the land. It must not only represent their composite opinion—an essential for holding office—but it must be prepared to give delicate and sensitive guidance into the uncharted era that lies ahead.

In this endeavor the President ought to have the assistance of a council of permanent advisers who represent every walk of life. This is not to suggest the creation of another of those presidential committees summoned often for specific tasks, whose members make recommendations and then go home and forget about them.

This would be a council which would meet at least once each month, a session to which the President would devote his full day to hearing brief reports from all the members who felt the need of saying something. The members could supplement their views in papers turned over to the President's staff for digesting. The flow of ideas, naturally, would run both ways. The President could test out tentative proposals on the group, get a quick reaction of opinion on how to solve some pressing problem, and be reasonably certain of national support when he acted.

This council would be made up of Americans who left their politics at home and went to Washington to represent labor, industry, science, education, banking, medicine, religion, the arts, farming, construction, small businessmen, the middleman, the stock-market broker, the states, the big-city man, the small-town man, the immigrant, and just plain Joe, who has no special interest.

Any President could spend six to eight hours with such a cross section of the American people and come away refreshed not only for the duties at hand but for the even more important task of planning for what is to come.

Certainly no President who hopes to maintain and extend the free world's bastions in the face of communism's missile-rattling threats can permit the nation to walk blindly into the future. For the nation must have the will and determination to hold free peoples together and lead them courageously in the intense struggle for the minds of men.

Only the President can lead this crusade for freedom. The people and Congress can provide help. But the President alone can carry the banner.

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